



**Cultural wellbeing in classroom communities:
A constructivist grounded theory study**

by

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of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and as duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

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Statement relating to published work contained in the thesis

This thesis builds upon ideas that were developed in the following publications:

Emery, S. (2017). Cultural wellbeing and respect for diversity in early childhood education. *Early Childhood Relationships: The Foundation for a Sustainable Future*. Proceedings from the 69th OMEP Conference, 19 June 2017 – 24 June 2014, Opatije, Croatia. ISBN 978-953-57634-1-3

Statement of co-authorship

This thesis contains material which appeared in a co-authored book chapter

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I co-authored this book chapter with my supervisor, Dr Jill Fielding-Wells. As first author I proposed, conceptualised and wrote the chapter. The second author supported the development of the ideas in the chapter, providing feedback on the initial proposal and on subsequent drafts of the chapter.

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Statement of Ethical Conduct

The research investigations conducted for this thesis abide by the ethical requirements of the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethics approval was gained through application H0014275.

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Abstract

Wellbeing is an increasingly important topic of schooling policy and research internationally. There is growing awareness that many young people experience challenges to their wellbeing during their schooling years. Supporting student wellbeing is a stated goal of Australian education policy and is embedded in the Australian Curriculum.

While research focusing on wellbeing has extended understandings of its physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual aspects, *cultural* aspects of wellbeing remain under-explored. The very term culture is one that has various and contested meanings across an array of research disciplines. In educational research, potential convergences between culture (variously conceptualised) and wellbeing, and their role in learning are being realised.

This study contributes to this emerging area by exploring educators' perceptions and practices of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities. Three research questions framed the inquiry: (i) What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing? (ii) How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities? and (iii) What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?

The research integrated constructivist grounded theory methodology with situational analysis to explore a multiplicity of interpretations of cultural wellbeing, while also interrogating complex power relations that the concept of cultural wellbeing surfaced. The primary data source for the study was a series of interviews with 15 educators from schools across a range of socio-economic settings.

The findings revealed that educators constructed varied and multiple meanings of cultural wellbeing which were informed by fluid interpretations of culture. This thesis reveals

that educators perceived that cultural wellbeing related to students' sense of connection to school, to people, places and cultures and that educators perceived they supported cultural wellbeing through enabling such connections to form.

Three prominent interpretations of culture were evident in the educators' accounts and became the basis for a typology of cultural wellbeing which was produced within the study and employed for analysing the multiple ways in which educators' cultural locations informed their perceptions of cultural wellbeing. The three components of the typology of cultural wellbeing related to (i) school culture, or the ways of life in the school, (ii) processes of recognition, and (iii) cultural participation and production.

Considering educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in the context of schooling in Australia reveals the many ways that schools continue to reproduce social and cultural inequalities. This occurs through the unequal access to forms of capital that educators in high and low socio-economic locations have for supporting students' cultural wellbeing. Inequalities are also reproduced through the reinscribing of dominant mainstream culture within schools. Schooling is concerned with broad goals of increasing equity and this thesis troubles school cultures, the ways that students are unequally recognised in schooling and the generative possibilities of cultural participation and production. In proposing a typology of cultural wellbeing, this thesis offer insights into how educators' social and cultural locations influence their perceptions of cultural wellbeing and how they perceive they support cultural wellbeing in their classroom communities. These insights may inform strategic approaches for supporting cultural wellbeing in improving the quality of schooling *towards greater equality for all students*.

Acknowledgement

This study has been a communal enterprise in many ways and I've learnt from and drawn strength from so many people throughout the process. The list is too long to name everyone, however there are some people who I must thank.

I acknowledge my three supervisors who have each contributed significantly to the ideas that underpin this project exploring cultural wellbeing. To Dr Mary Ann Hunter and Dr Janet Dymont, thank you for helping me to steer this into a project that could hold my fascination for its duration, for encouraging me onwards and for the constant reminders to remain wide awake to my own assumptions. To Dr Jill Fielding-Wells, I so appreciated your methodological insights. You gave me the confidence that when the journey sometimes became overwhelming, the methodology could offer a way forward. I particularly want to acknowledge and thank all of the participants who engaged with this study and shared their experiences with me. Your voices have become so familiar to me as I have listened again and again to our interviews and reflected on what I learned from you. I believe your insights are important for helping schools become places of cultural wellbeing.

I send my deep gratitude to those who gave me wings: my Mum and Dad, my children and all four of my grandparents who I love and admire so much and draw inspiration from every day. To my daughters Juliette and Bronte to whom I dedicate this thesis. I love you with all my heart and want you to know that you were the inspiration for this PhD. To my family as a whole who have always been there for me, especially MDA (My Dear Aunt) Di Nailon, a fellow traveller on this doctoral journey, thank you for mentoring me throughout my life. To my doctoral soul-sister Kim Beasy for the joy and positivity you always bring, and deep thanks to my dearest friends Kerry Reynolds, Tania Stibbe and Maggie Third who

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I acknowledge Aboriginal and Indigenous people past, present and future. I acknowledge that I live, work and conduct research on Aboriginal land which was never ceded. I acknowledge that I take part in research which has a long history of unjust and unethical practice that has extended injury, has marginalised and has exacerbated traumas experienced in the aftermath of colonisation. I endeavour to conduct research ethically and seek to do no harm through my research, and to listen and consult honestly and transparently with all people, including Aboriginal and Indigenous peoples, involved in and impacted by this research. I seek to share the findings and benefits of this research back to the communities that have participated in the study and more broadly to the field of education.

Acknowledgement of diagrams

I thank Damien Walker for producing the artwork for all diagrams in this thesis.

Table of contents

Declaration of Originality	ii
Statement relating to published work contained in the thesis	ii
Statement of co-authorship	iii
Authority of Access	iv
Statement of Ethical Conduct.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Acknowledgement.....	vii
Table of contents	i
List of tables	v
List of figures	vi
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Explanation of key terms	7
1.2 Summary of the thesis.....	9
Chapter 2 Locating cultural wellbeing	12
2.1 Background to this study of cultural wellbeing	13
2.1.1 Children’s rights.....	14
2.1.2 Educational goals for young Australians	15
2.1.3 Student wellbeing	16
2.1.4 Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model	18
2.1.5 Wellbeing in curriculum policies.....	21
2.2 Contemporary discourses of student wellbeing.....	22
2.2.1 Dimensionalising wellbeing.....	22
2.2.2 Responsibilising and individualising wellbeing	23
2.2.3 Commodifying wellbeing	26
2.3 Culture.....	27
2.4 Cultural wellbeing	31
2.4.1 Themes of cultural wellbeing	32
2.4.1.1 <i>Connections, relationships and belonging</i>	32
2.4.1.2 <i>Participation in social and cultural practices</i>	34

2.4.1.3 Links between cultural wellbeing and overall wellbeing.....	35
2.4.2 Cultural wellbeing in schooling.....	36
2.4.2.1 Culture and schooling in Australia.....	37
2.5 Conclusion.....	39
Chapter 3 Methodology and methods.....	41
3.1 Research paradigm: Symbolic interactionism	42
3.2 Methodology.....	44
3.2.1 Constructivist grounded theory	44
3.2.2 Situational analysis.....	46
3.2.3 Methodology summary	48
3.3 Methods	50
3.3.1 Research Aim and Research Questions	50
3.3.2 Data sources	50
3.3.2.1 Interviews with educators.....	51
Research Participants.....	51
Sampling of Participants.....	53
Participant recruitment.....	60
Ethical Considerations	60
The interview process	61
3.3.2.2 Memoing.....	62
3.3.3 Constant Comparative Analysis.....	63
3.4 Conclusion.....	64
Chapter 4 Data analysis	65
4.1 Research question 1: What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing? ...	66
4.1.1 Constructivist grounded theory analysis.....	66
4.1.2 Coding the data	67
4.1.3 Constant Comparative Analysis.....	69
4.1.4 Creating categories in the data	70
4.2 Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?	70
4.2.1 The messy map	73
4.2.2 The ordered map	75
4.2.3 The social worlds/arenas map	77
4.3 Research question 3: What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?	79
4.4 Inter-coder reliability	80
4.5 Clarifying the role of the literature	81
4.8 Conclusion.....	82

Chapter 5	Findings	84
5.1	Research question 1: What perceptions do educators have of cultural wellbeing?	84
5.1.1	Interpretations of cultural wellbeing are situated in local contexts	86
5.1.2	Cultural wellbeing has an affective quality	89
5.1.3	Cultural wellbeing is related to healthy connections with people, places and cultures.....	95
	<i>Healthy connections with people.....</i>	<i>95</i>
	<i>Healthy connections with, and uses of, places</i>	<i>97</i>
5.2	Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?	103
5.2.1	Enabling experiences of connection	103
	<i>5.2.1.1 Connection with people and community.....</i>	<i>104</i>
	<i>5.2.1.2 Forming connections with nature and the environment</i>	<i>107</i>
	<i>5.2.1.3 Connecting with cultural worlds.....</i>	<i>111</i>
5.3	Conclusion.....	115
Chapter 6	Cultural wellbeing and social locations	117
6.1	Bourdieu's theoretical concepts	118
6.1.1	Capital	119
6.1.2	Habitus	120
6.1.3	Field.....	122
6.2	"The resources are at my fingertips": Access to cultural capital	124
6.3	"That's not our agenda here": Logics of practice	132
6.4	Conclusion.....	136
Chapter 7	Towards a typology of cultural wellbeing	137
7.1	Visualising the typology of cultural wellbeing	138
7.2	Type 1 School culture	140
7.3	Type 2 Recognition of students	145
7.4	Type 3 Participation in cultural production	148
7.5	Towards an ecological perspective of the typology of cultural wellbeing	152
7.6	Conclusion.....	154
Chapter 8	Cultural locations	155
8.1	School culture.....	156
8.2	Recognition	160
8.3	Cultural production	165
8.4	Conclusion.....	168

Chapter 9	Conclusion.....	171
9.1	Contributions of the research.....	173
9.1.1	Answering the Research Questions.....	173
	<i>Research question 1: What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?.....</i>	<i>174</i>
	<i>Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?.....</i>	<i>175</i>
	<i>Research question 3: What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?</i>	<i>178</i>
9.1.2	Articulating an emergent grounded theory approach.....	179
9.2	Implications and opportunities for further research	181
References	184
Appendix A.....	217
Appendix B.....	219
Appendix C.....	222
Appendix D.....	224
Appendix E.....	240
Appendix F	244
F.1	A typology of culture – literature connections.....	244
F.2	Type 1: Culture as the ways of life around here.....	246
F.3	Type 2: Culture as recognition and how we identify as humans.....	248
F.4	Type 3: Culture as cultural participation, expression and production.....	250
Appendix G	253

List of tables

Table 3.1 Research questions and challenges	49
Table 3.2 Participants' details	52
Table 3.3 Selection of the first four participants based on concepts from literature	57
Table 3.4 Selection of participants to explore influence of school socio-economic level.....	58
Table 3.5 Selection of participants to explore emerging theoretical concepts.....	59
Table 4.1 Forms of analysis for each research question	66
Table 5.1 Educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing	90
Table F-1 - Concepts of culture.....	245

List of figures

Figure 2.1 - Adapted from Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (1995b)	19
Figure 4.1 - Research question 1 data analysis workflow.....	67
Figure 4.2 - Research question 2 data analysis workflow.....	73
Figure 4.3 - Messy map of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing.....	74
Figure 4.4 - Ordered situational map of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing	76
Figure 4.5 - Social worlds/arenas map.....	78
Figure 7.1 - Visual representation of the typology of cultural wellbeing.....	139
Figure F-1 - A visual representation of the typology of culture.....	246

Chapter 1

Introduction

Memo: 16/4/18 Wrestling with an enigma

How is it that the concept of cultural wellbeing has been my constant companion and my constant torment for more than four years now? How can one idea remain such an enigma for so long? What might cultural wellbeing be? What might it do? What does cultural wellbeing look like, what does it feel like? These are just a few of the questions that have kept me awake at night as I have navigated my way through this doctoral study.

Thoughts about the what and the how of cultural wellbeing are central to this study, but in the closing phases of the research I'm intrigued by the why. Why cultural wellbeing? Why now? Ideas don't just appear from nowhere – so why is it that I think sharing understandings of cultural wellbeing is so important at this particular point in time?

In recent years I've become increasingly aware of children's wellbeing in school. Media reports and research studies reveal that many young people experience poor wellbeing during their schooling. As a mother, an educator and a researcher, this was something I felt we pay too little attention to as a society. It is my view that the teachers and educators who work with children and young people every school day are well placed to support student wellbeing, but this is an area that is somewhat cloudy and uncertain, and an area in which they receive insufficient support. I believe the concept of cultural wellbeing might offer something to educators – a way of thinking about the interplay between culture and wellbeing which is not widely explored or understood in schooling research. I embarked on this inquiry with the belief that educators could help develop shared understandings about cultural wellbeing which would be useful for other educators.

That was the starting point of my research. What I did not know then was that the concept of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities would do much more: I did not realise that asking educators about their perceptions and practices of supporting cultural wellbeing would reveal signs of social and cultural inequality in schooling. I set forth in this study thinking that cultural wellbeing was something that would be beneficial for all. I was not at all prepared for the encounter with inequality that was contained within this benign-sounding concept.

Wellbeing is an increasingly important topic for research in Australian education and a goal of education addressed within curriculum frameworks (Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2012; Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008). Recent studies have revealed that growing proportions of children and young people experience wellbeing struggles during their schooling years. There are concerns that contemporary conditions of schooling might be contributing to some of the wellbeing issues that children and young people experience (Dulfer, Polesel, & Rice, 2012). School is one of the major life experiences for children and young people and therefore reports of growing concerns of the wellbeing difficulties being experienced in schooling compel further enquiry.

Cultural wellbeing is beginning to appear in education policies in numerous countries, notably New Zealand (Education Review Office, 2016), Ireland (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2017) and Scotland (Scottish Government, 2018). While much research has been conducted in the more general area of student wellbeing, the concept of cultural wellbeing has not been widely considered and there is little education theory specifically addressing this aspect of schooling, with the notable exception of Indigenous-led research.

Student wellbeing has become a growing field of research. A plethora of different approaches are employed for conceptualising and measuring wellbeing (Huppert, 2014) yet

wellbeing remains an under-theorised area (Camfield, Crivello, & Woodhead, 2009; Statham & Chase, 2010; Thomas, Graham, Powell, & Fitzgerald, 2016).

One aspect of wellbeing which is not well understood relates to *cultural* aspects of wellbeing which represent a growing area of interest in education research (Statham & Chase, 2010). This study sets out to advance understandings of the interplay between culture and wellbeing. I seek to contribute to this research gap with an inquiry into the concept of *cultural wellbeing*.

Student wellbeing is a complex field. Developing more nuanced understandings of wellbeing that take account of its complexity is a research priority (Taylor, 2011). Understanding the interplay between culture and wellbeing represents an important area of opportunity for addressing these gaps in the extant literature and research.

This study explores educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing and the ways they support cultural wellbeing in their classroom communities. The inquiry has two aims:

- To explore multiple and diverse perspectives of cultural wellbeing from educators in a range of different school settings.
- To make a theoretical contribution to emerging understandings of cultural wellbeing.

These aims are pursued through three research questions:

Research question 1:

What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?

Research question 2:

How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

Research question 3:

What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?

I designed a qualitative research study that maintains an openness to the emergence of cultural wellbeing as a concept without seeking a singular definition. I worked in collaboration with educators, valuing their diverse and plural interpretations of cultural wellbeing, in an effort to make meaning of the concept. I consider meaning to arise from people's practices, and hold the view that groups of people who take part in common practices often share goals and hold shared meanings relating to those practices (Charmaz, 2014).

The idea for a study of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities originated out of earlier research projects in which I was fortunate to be involved. These included a study of sustainability as a cross curriculum priority (CCP) in Tasmanian schools (Dyment, Hill, & Emery, 2015), my Master of Education thesis on the topic of Arts for Sustainability (Emery, 2013) and a subsequent community engagement project, led by my supervisor Dr Mary Ann Hunter, called the Curious Schools Project (Hunter & Emery, 2015). Looking closely at creative teaching in a number of school-community arts projects, and the ways in which these projects enlivened schools, provoked me to want to understand the many ways in which cultural participation and production benefitted students and the life of the school.

Commencing my doctoral studies with these recent research collaborations fresh in mind, I was keen to deepen my understandings of cultural aspects of schooling and education. I wanted to learn more about what might be "cultural" about schooling, and how this might influence schooling experiences. I decided that *cultural wellbeing* could be a

generative concept to employ for surfacing educators' perspectives of cultural aspects of life in classroom communities and how these cultural aspects might influence students' wellbeing. This presented an opportunity to build meanings of cultural wellbeing with educators and potentially amplify their voices in education discourses relating to wellbeing. I sought to gain insights from educators about this somewhat curious topic and share their insights more broadly. The direction and focus of my study arose from these multiple early ideas.

Memo: 25 August 2018 Confirmation as a necessary awakening

During my confirmation of candidature for this project, a provocation came from the external committee member on my confirmation panel, Professor Maggie Walter who asked "How are you going to account for your whiteness in this study?" At the time that question felt foreign to me; it was like a riddle, such was my worldview at the time. I had not given much thought to my social or cultural locations and how these might influence what I was able to see or to access in this study. That was one of my early awakenings in this research. It hasn't been an easy question to grapple with and I still recognise my (past and present) struggles with surfacing my own worldviews and biases.

The question from Professor Walter was my constant companion as I was welcomed for a short while into the lives of teachers and educators in classrooms who shared with me their perceptions of cultural wellbeing, often along with their experiences, their insecurities and their own questions about the complexity of classroom community life which they navigate each school day. The provocation for me to think about my whiteness in this research project became a touchstone for me to be aware of the various social and cultural positions I occupy; as a mother, a non-Indigenous woman, an educated woman, a researcher, a person of privilege, someone who has not encountered racism or the experience of intergenerational trauma, poverty or disadvantage. I drew on that question from Professor Walter many times and in many ways during the research – never really answering it, but

continually asking it. Looking for the unconscious bias or prejudice that I might bring with me into each new situation helped me to remain reflexive.

I acknowledge that meanings of cultural wellbeing amongst different cultural groups of people are significant and special to those communities and this work is not intended to supplant that work, nor to appropriate it or draw focus away from the important work done, particularly by Aboriginal and Indigenous scholars and community members past and present. I understand that my position and my world views are both strengths and limitations in this research. This has informed the choice I made to not seek to define cultural wellbeing in this study. Instead I explore the meanings that educators make of the term.

This research comprises a constructivist grounded theory study based on interviews conducted with educators in Australian schools. The research questions and the research dilemmas encountered during the study propelled the need for methodological innovation. Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz 2014) together with situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) formed the methodology and methods package, providing ways of exploring educators' situated perspectives of cultural wellbeing. Situational mapping and social worlds/arenas mapping were employed in the research design to achieve the research aims.

My analysis surfaced social and cultural inequalities which were inherent within educators' situated perspectives of cultural wellbeing, which I discussed in relation to theories of social practice (Bourdieu, 1990), recognition (Honneth, 1996, 2014) and representation (Hall, 1997a). Studies have found that social contexts are consequential for wellbeing (Helliwell, Barrington-Leigh, Harris, & Huang, 2009; Helliwell & Putnam, 2004), which informed my decision to draw on Bourdieu's logic of practice and concepts of capital, habitus and field in interpreting educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing. I developed a

typology of cultural wellbeing by drawing on ecological systems understandings to theorise socio-political aspects of the study.

The typology is an output of the study designed to support researcher and educator engagement with the interplay between culture and wellbeing. Employing the typology, I offer a working interpretation of cultural wellbeing as *the positive benefits generated in classroom communities through participation in the school culture, the recognition of classroom community members, and the cultural production of classroom community life*.

I have been able to access the perceptions of a range of educators of what cultural wellbeing means to them and what they do to support it. This has revealed that educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing differ in different contexts, as do the ways they support it. For some educators, this involved helping students meet their basic needs of security or overcoming hunger, while for others, cultural wellbeing was perceived as helping students make the best of the many life opportunities and experiences available to them. But for all educators, supporting cultural wellbeing was an expression of their embodied sense of responsibility for helping students progress to a better place. I employed the typology of cultural wellbeing to interrogate power relations within the Australian school system that are implicated in educators' approaches to supporting students' wellbeing.

1.1 Explanation of key terms

A brief explanation of some of the key terms employed in this thesis is provided here. The terms are developed further within the thesis.

Culture: a concept which has multiple and evolving meanings, which include (though are not limited to) people's ways of life, how people identify and recognise each other, and people's identification with and participation in practices. Of interest in considering

educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing are the ways in which culture informs educators' strategies for action (Swidler, 1986), and Bourdieu's (1984) notion that cultural patterns provide structures in which individuals can develop particular strategies.

Wellbeing: a dynamic phenomenon which relates to students' effective functioning in a classroom community. Wellbeing is a term with multiple contested meanings which relate to the qualities of life experienced by people. This study focuses on *subjective wellbeing*, as perceived by people in their own terms, and explores meanings of cultural wellbeing from educators' perspectives.

Schooling: I locate this inquiry in the field of schooling. Schooling is an institutional process of mass education, which in this study I interpret as a social and cultural process (Bruner, 1996). McGregor, Mills, Te Riele, Baroutsis and Hayes (2017) contend that schooling works as a system with fundamental relational patterns and power structures that are persistent and which resist change even when there are attempts to change schooling practices. I interrogate these relational patterns and power structures drawing on Bourdieu's (1984) concept of *field* to conceptualise schooling as an arena with its own cultural practices and common-sense logics. Further, according to Bourdieu's theories, the field of schooling, has its own valued forms of *capital* (one of which is cultural capital, a focal point for this study) that are generative of a school *habitus*, which influences actions and positions taken by social actors. The use of these concepts as an analytic lens is explained in Section 6.1.

Classroom Communities: a spacio-temporal phenomenon involving all actors in the space in which school learning is conducted. Typically, this includes teachers or educators, students and other people who take part in the class. Following Clarke (2005), other non-human actors are recognised as part of classroom communities including material and spatial elements and discourses.

Educators: While the majority of the participants in this study are school teachers, some are educators who are employed in community-based organisations and work with students in classroom communities. I employ the term *educator* when referring generally to participants. I use the term *teacher* where referring to a specific participant who is a teacher, and when drawing upon literature that refers to teachers.

Social location: refers to the relative circumstances that contextualise people's lives. Social location as a concept is also described as *social class* by Bourdieu (1984), which he construed in terms of the volume of capital (economic and social goods) people possess.

Socio-economic status (SES): I refer to school socio-economic status (SES), based on the school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) published on the MySchools website (www.myschool.edu.au). ICSEA provides a numeric scale that represents the relative level of educational advantage of the student population, accounting for both student/family and school level factors (ACARA, n.d.). 1000 is deemed by ACARA to be the average ICSEA score. I distinguish three different school socio-economic status levels drawing on the ICSEA data from the MySchool website and employ the following terms: where educators worked in schools with ICSEA scores under 950 (n=6) I apply the term "low SES"; from 950 to 1049 I use "average SES" (n=3); and "high SES" where the ICSEA is over 1050 (n=4). ICSEA scores did not apply for two educators who worked in multiple schools (Natalie and Belinda).

1.2 Summary of the thesis

This chapter has established the broad conceptual territory of the research and outlined my interpretations of key terms. I explained some of the background to the study and stated the research aims and questions. In Chapter 2 I locate the term "wellbeing" in current

education literature and curriculum policy and consider some implications of the ways that wellbeing is framed. I argue that wellbeing is insufficiently addressed in the Australian school curriculum, and that this risks ad hoc approaches to supporting wellbeing in schooling. I consider a number of relevant theoretical concepts relating to meanings of culture from cultural studies and critical perspectives and the literature review provides an overview of the small body of interdisciplinary research that has begun to address the concept of cultural wellbeing.

The methodology, methods and data analysis are the focus of Chapters 3 and 4. This research explores a topic about which there has been little prior research in the field of education. I explain how combining constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis enabled the surfacing of multiple diverse perspectives of cultural wellbeing and I outline the process of theorising cultural wellbeing through this emergent grounded theory approach.

Chapter 5 presents the research findings for the first two research questions. First, I explore educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in response to research question 1: What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing? The second part of the chapter focuses on research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities? The findings in this chapter reveal the diverse ways in which educators draw on resources and practices to support cultural wellbeing. Chapter 6 discusses the findings from the first two research questions by considering how educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing were socially located, drawing upon Bourdieu's concepts of capital, habitus and field.

In Chapter 7 I draw on educators' perceptions to propose a typology of cultural wellbeing in response to research question 3: "What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?" The typology of cultural wellbeing is employed in Chapter 8 to explore the culturally located nature of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing. Chapter 9 concludes

the thesis by presenting a working interpretation of cultural wellbeing, discussing implications of this study and suggesting some future research directions.

Chapter 2

Locating cultural wellbeing

Wellbeing is an increasingly important research topic in Australian education, and for the purposes of this literature review is considered within a human rights framework as outlined in Section 2.1. In the opening of this chapter I outline the concept of wellbeing and consider the presence of student wellbeing in schooling discourses and in curriculum policies in Australia. I contemplate the concept of *cultural wellbeing* by first considering interpretations of culture and how these have shifted over time, and then considering meanings of cultural wellbeing as it is emerging in research literature.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) encompasses wellbeing in its definition of health, indicating that health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (World Health Organization, 2014).

Wellbeing is an ambiguous concept (McLeod & Wright, 2015) that the WHO connects with definitions of basic health, which is a more highly prescribed concept (often based on statistical health measures and indicators such as life expectancy). Wellbeing is frequently paired with health in the often-used expression “health and wellbeing”. Through this widespread use in general parlance, it is evident there is some type of link between health and

wellbeing, even though it is not particularly well specified. WHO, for example, indicates that “feelings of wellbeing during childhood provide sound foundations for positive health in later adolescence and adulthood” (World Health Organization, 2003, p. 5). This connection made between the concepts of wellbeing and health by the World Health Organisation reflects the widely accepted understanding that people’s health can be positively supported through maintenance of their wellbeing, providing a common-sense foundation for supporting student wellbeing in schooling.

At the government policy level there is increased understanding that populations who maintain positive wellbeing tend to live longer, happier lives and are less reliant on the health system (Dalziel & Saunders, 2014; Marmot, 2010). Therefore, supporting wellbeing is becoming an increasingly accepted part of government policy both internationally and in Australia (Henry, 2006; Marmot, 2010; World Health Organization & Government of South Australia, 2010). Children’s wellbeing is a topic of concern across many parts of the world, with UNICEF noting that matters which come under the moniker of “wellbeing” may be quite different between wealthier countries and countries where economic disadvantage is prevalent. In so-called disadvantaged countries, wellbeing concerns often relate to basic human needs (UNICEF Office of Research, 2013).

2.1 Background to this study of cultural wellbeing

There is growing interest from policy makers and the wider community in notions of cultural wellbeing in the context of schooling. Two key historical moments have contributed to this growing interest: The first is the ratification in 1989 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, referred to as “the Convention”) which offers a number of underpinning principles conducive to exploring meanings of cultural wellbeing. The second moment, one of local rather than global significance, was the signing of the

Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008) which provides further impetus for fostering understandings of cultural wellbeing. These two key moments establish an important historical backdrop for this study of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities through the underpinning principles they establish for education in Australia.

2.1.1 Children's rights

The ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989 prompted shifts in the ways that children and young people are viewed as social actors, cultural participants and contributors. Noting that childhood is a social construction constituted within social and historical discourses, James and Prout (1997b) argue the Convention has served a foundational role in reframing understandings of childhood as a “part of society and culture” (p. ix) in contrast to former views of childhood as a time which preceded a person's arrival into society and culture. The UNCRC is a moment that disrupted former discourses of childhood and youth which focused on children as “future adults” or “becomings” (Uprichard, 2008) . Positioning children as future adults removes their legitimacy as current active contributing members of their community and, instead, implies legitimacy occurs only through adulthood.

James and Prout (1997b, 2015) along with other critical scholars (Holloway & Valentine, 2005; Uprichard, 2008) advanced a view of children as human *beings and becomings* in the here and now, rather than a valuing of children only as citizens of the future. The Convention established culture, and the ways children and young people are recognised and valued as cultural beings, as important priorities in the domain of education. Such shifts led to increasing acceptance that children and young people are capable and active social participants in the construction of culture, experiences and knowledge in their

present and future lives (Uprichard, 2008, p. 311). This moment of calibrating a new global accord on childhood was key in the emergence of strength-based discourses of children and young people. Within this new rights-based framing, human development became understood more widely as a cultural process and not simply a biological or psychological process (Rogoff, 2003). Thus, a new sociology of childhood has gained acceptance within education discourses in which children and young people are viewed as “active in the construction of their own lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live” (James & Prout, 1997a, p. 8).

2.1.2 Educational goals for young Australians

Signed almost a decade after the UNCRC, the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA, 2008) (“the Declaration”) employs some of the Convention’s language. For example, the Declaration commits Australia’s states to providing school education that gives “all young Australians the opportunity to reach their full potential” (MCEETYA 2008, p. 18) which resonates with Article 29(a) of the UNCRC that confers upon signatories the duty for education to be directed towards developing children “to their fullest potential”.

Two goals form the centrepiece of the Melbourne Declaration:

- Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence, and
- All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

(MCEETYA, 2008)

The Declaration asserts the role of education in building a nation that is “cohesive and culturally diverse, and that values Australia’s Indigenous cultures as a key part of the nation’s history, present and future” (p. 4). Schools play a vital role “in promoting students’ intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing” (p. 4) however the Declaration makes little reference to culture in relation to the wellbeing of students*.

School is compulsory for children and young people in Australia and the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2003) recommends the development of approaches that support the wellbeing of children and young people at school. The UNCRC emphasises the importance of children’s wellbeing in all aspects of social life, which includes school life, and the Melbourne Declaration emphasises student wellbeing is an important aspect of schooling. These high-level national and international commitments compel the ongoing development of nuanced understandings about the phenomenon of wellbeing, including its relationship to culture.

2.1.3 Student wellbeing

Wellbeing is a complex and contested concept. There are many aspects of wellbeing which are open to diverse interpretations, including questions relevant to schooling: *What is student wellbeing, what leads to it, and how can the wellbeing of students be supported?*

* This study takes a broad view of cultural wellbeing as a concept in the field of schooling. Conducted in the context of contemporary Australia, this study engages with multiple interpretations of culture and draws upon a diverse array of literatures. The idea of cultural wellbeing as an aspect of Australian education policy has been significantly advanced by ongoing and collective efforts of Indigenous education communities in Australia who have consistently called for prioritisation of holistic approaches to wellbeing in education (Cairney & Abbott, 2014; Garvey, 2008). Garvey (2008, p. 3) explains that, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: “the social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of the whole community is paramount and essential for the health and wellbeing of the individuals who comprise it, as is the bond between person and land”. In Indigenous research, cultural wellbeing is considered as integral to a holistic idea of health and wellbeing, which is a view I seek to explore in relation to schooling.

These are questions of increasing relevance in the Australian school system where concerns about student wellbeing are becoming a growing public discourse (Chapman, 2015; Dulfer et al., 2012; McLeod & Wright, 2015). The importance of student wellbeing is indicated by the Department of Education and Training which states, “The Australian Government recognises that schools play a vital role in promoting the social and emotional development and wellbeing of young Australians” (Australian Government Department of Education and Training [DET], 2017).

A number of definitions of student wellbeing exist: for example, one popular definition from Fraillon (2004, p. 23) is “the degree to which a student is functioning effectively in the school community”. More recently student wellbeing has been defined as “a sustainable state characterised by predominantly positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships at school, resilience, self-optimisation and a high level of satisfaction with learning experiences” (Noble, Wyatt, McGrath, Roffey, & Rowling, 2008, p. 30).

Mayr and Ulich (1999) suggest physical health, social functioning, feelings of happiness and satisfaction are indicators of wellbeing and are realised in children’s interactions with their environment(s). Aspects within a child’s family, community and society combine to shape wellbeing in complex ways and Bronfenbrenner’s (1995b) bioecological model has been usefully employed in wellbeing research to help to depict this complexity. As the next section outlines, this model represents individuals as influencing and being influenced by the environments and settings in which they are located (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

2.1.4 Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model

Ecological systems perspectives emphasise the wellbeing benefits of the connections and relationships that children and young people form through interactions within and between multiple layers of their environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1995a; Gergen, 2009). The bioecological model depicts individuals within a nested set of environments which, at the most proximal microsystems level, include the everyday settings such as home and school and extend outward from there to include the exosystem and macrosystem levels which encompass broader economic, social, cultural and political systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1995a; Sanagavarapu, 2010; Seung Lam & Pollard, 2006).

Of particular relevance to this study, classroom communities are conceptualised in the bioecological model as part of the microsystem depicted in Figure 2.1, which signifies the young person's immediate environment (for example relationships between students, educators and classmates). Important too are the interactions between young people and the other layers of the environment that are influential to wellbeing (including the exosystem, mesosystem and macrosystem).

The bioecological model can be used to locate environmental, geographic, socio-economic and political influences that are significant in shaping wellbeing (La Placa, McNaught, & Knight, 2013). La Placa and colleagues further suggest that circumstances, locality, activities and psychological resources combine with interpersonal relations with families, peers and significant others to dynamically construct children's wellbeing.

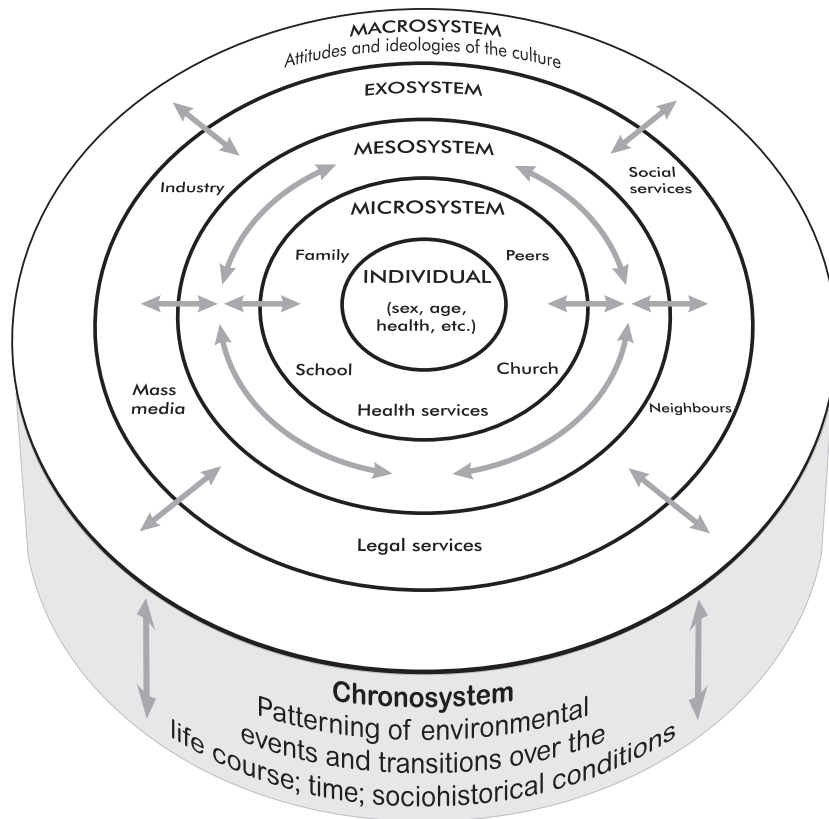


Figure 2.1 - Adapted from Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (1995b)

The ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the later bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1995b) have been employed in wellbeing research to consider the wellbeing of individuals in relation to the environments in which they live, work, learn and play (cf. Dymont et al., 2017; Guhn & Goelman, 2011; Kanu, 2008; O'Toole, Hayes, & Mhathúna, 2014). For example, the bioecological model (1995b) was employed by O'Toole, Hayes and Mhathúna (2014) to investigate student wellbeing during transitions between school stages in Ireland. More recently the model has been employed in Tasmania by Dymont, Emery, Doherty and Eckhardt (2017) for a case study of "Move Well Eat Well", a student wellbeing program that has been widely adopted in primary schools and early childhood services.

Bronfenbrenner's theory helps to *depict and locate* influences on student wellbeing in relation to different layers of the bioecological model and the broader systemic and structural influences upon wellbeing. However Houston (2017) critiques Bronfenbrenner's work for under-theorising "how power permeates social life at the micro, meso, exo or macro levels" (p. 58) and advocates a pragmatic alignment of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model with social theory to compensate for this. In particular, Houston advocates Bourdieu's theory of social practice and his analytical categories of field, capital and habitus. Houston (2017) notes the different epistemological orientations of the two theories, with Bronfenbrenner's originating in the psycho-social study of child development and Bourdieu's arising in the field of social theory, but argues "there are some convergences between the two theories which allow for their mutual enrichment" (p. 54). These convergences include the depiction of individual, family, social and cultural elements as influential aspects of student wellbeing.

The rich conceptual groundwork undertaken by Bronfenbrenner through the development of the bioecological model has supported the further development of systems theory models (for example *complex adaptive systems*) (Darling, 2007). More recently Gergen (2009) has drawn on systems thinking in his extensive scholarship on relationality. Taking a relational view of schooling, Gergen notes "systems thinking begins when one realises that all effects are also causes of other effects" (p. 376). Gergen (2009) places emphasis on wellbeing as a relational quality developed *between people* which contrasts with Bronfenbrenner's focus on the individual at the centre of the bioecological model. For Gergen, increasing interactions between people in widening circles of participation is generative of wellbeing benefits. In depicting the classroom community and the action and interactions therein as a central focal point in this study, I draw on both Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model and Gergen's concept of relationality. In this study, Bronfenbrenner's

(1995b) model is employed as a heuristic device to help map interpretations of culture and to depict the interplay between culture and wellbeing.

2.1.5 Wellbeing in curriculum policies

Wellbeing is included in the Australian curriculum and informs how educators enact wellbeing in the classroom. Recent developments in Australia's educational policies have placed a greater focus on children's wellbeing in schooling (Timperley, 2011). This is evident in curriculum policy documents including the Early Years Learning Framework (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2009) and the Australian Curriculum (ACARA 2016b), and Australia's Teacher Professional Standards (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2014).

As noted earlier, the Melbourne Declaration which underpins Australia's curriculum policies emphasises that education must address "contemporary issues of relevance to young Australians" (MCEETYA, 2008). Children's wellbeing is one of these issues. It is specifically addressed by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (DEEWR 2009), a framework created for children aged from birth – 5 years, which includes as Outcome 3 "Children have a strong sense of wellbeing" (p. 30). In its elaboration of The Shape of the Australian Curriculum, ACARA further emphasises wellbeing as a central goal of schooling stating "the Australian Curriculum is aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework and builds on its key learning outcomes, namely: children have a strong sense of identity; children are connected with, and contribute to, their world; children have a strong sense of wellbeing..." (ACARA 2010, p. 9, 2012, p. 10).

Key curriculum documents state that student wellbeing has become part of the remit of teaching. Educators are expected to support the wellbeing of the students they teach and,

additionally, “assist students to develop their ability to take positive action for wellbeing” (ACARA, 2016b Learning 3-6; Urbis, 2011). The health and personal development curriculum are the main locations for the delivery of wellbeing education (McLeod, 2015), where teachers are tasked with taking a strengths-based and critical inquiry approach to develop students’ knowledge, understandings and skills required to enhance their own and others’ health and wellbeing. (ACARA, 2016b 8.3 Health and Physical Education).

2.2 Contemporary discourses of student wellbeing

Wellbeing has acquired a particular currency in Australia’s school systems where promoting wellbeing “increasingly informs policy objectives aimed at improving the lives of young people” (Wright & McLeod, 2015, p. 1). While a positive sense of wellbeing is purported to enhance opportunities for students to reach their full potential, as evidenced in research and literature relating to student health and wellbeing (Bonell et al., 2014; Suhrcke & de Paz Nieves, 2011), multiple lines of critique of the concept of wellbeing are emerging. In the following section I briefly introduce the “wellbeing problem” as it relates to schooling, and the critiques emerging which centre on the individualising, “responsibilising”, and commodification of wellbeing.

2.2.1 Dimensionalising wellbeing

Student wellbeing is often conceptualised in “dimensional” ways through framework models (cf. the Learner Wellbeing Framework, South Australia Department of Education and Children’s Services [DECS], 2007) which depict wellbeing as a range of interconnected dimensions, such as physical, social and emotional, spiritual, cognitive and mental wellbeing (DECS, 2007; Pollard & Lee, 2003; Zaff et al., 2003). Some of these dimensions, such as physical wellbeing and social emotional wellbeing, have widely shared meanings. Physical

wellbeing, for example, is often the way a child's wellbeing is first considered and is concerned with a child's physical health, their rate of growth, diet, movement and safety (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2013). Physical wellbeing is monitored using a range of indicators, including levels of physical activity and health behaviours (Bradshaw & Bloor, 2011). Social and emotional wellbeing, another well-known dimension of wellbeing, is considered as the ways in which a person thinks and feels about themselves and others, and reflects an individual's capacity to adapt to and cope with regular life challenges (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2012, p. 8). Other dimensions included in wellbeing models are less widely understood. Spiritual wellbeing, for example, is described by the DECS framework as a sense of connectedness to something larger than oneself and an accompanying sense of meaning, purpose and personal values (DECS, 2007). Research has emerged in recent decades around this spiritual dimension (Fisher, 2001, 2010). Studies conducted with teachers and students have led to the development of a framework through which spiritual wellbeing is shown by the extent to which people live in harmony with themselves, others, the environment and a transcendental other (Fisher, 2006, 2011).

The above account of ways in which wellbeing dimensions encompassed in the Learner Wellbeing Framework have been the focus of research offers a snapshot of one approach to representing wellbeing. Recent contributions to discourses of wellbeing have critiqued dimensional models of wellbeing for seeking to compartmentalise a holistic phenomenon into a discrete set of constituent parts (Atkinson, 2013). In the next section I highlight recent critical perspectives of the ways in which wellbeing is framed in schooling.

2.2.2 Responsibilising and individualising wellbeing

Discursive constructions of “the wellbeing problem” are part of contemporary discourses of student wellbeing. Critical scholars argue there is an individualising of

wellbeing in schools, where wellbeing is portrayed as the “problem” of individual students, their families and teachers (Carlisle, Henderson, & Hanlon, 2009; Wright & McLeod, 2015). This has the effect of constructing wellbeing as the responsibility of students, families and teachers, in place of addressing underlying social causes of wellbeing issues (Simmons, Graham, & Thomas, 2015). This process can take attention away from the larger structural or systemic factors which contribute to wellbeing issues experienced by students.

As previously outlined, wellbeing is a complex concept to understand and assessing student wellbeing is problematic. In effect, wellbeing can be somewhat “invisible” (Carel, 2008) until it is evident that there is a wellbeing problem in an individual or a situation which is typically recognised in the interactions between individuals and their environments (Wright & McLeod, 2015).

Educators are responsible for supporting student wellbeing, as indicated in national curriculum blueprints where, for example, “The Australian Curriculum across Years 3-6 assists students to develop their ability to take positive action for wellbeing...” (ACARA 2016a). However, in Australia’s school systems, wellbeing policies and practices have been implemented in fragmented and ad hoc ways and, according to Powell and Graham (2017), this leaves teachers grappling with “how best to embed wellbeing within the policies, cultures, practices and resourcing of schools” (p. 214). Wellbeing is indicated as being within a teacher’s remit, however there is a lack of clarity surrounding the range of wellbeing concerns that are included under this responsibility as well as the extent of educators’ responsibilities (Clarke & Moore, 2013). This lack of clarity about the extent to which educators are responsible for student wellbeing has the potential to leave teachers in an uncertain position about deciding how and how far to support students’ wellbeing (Clarke & Moore, 2013).

Krieg (2009), for example, notes that educators' roles in supporting wellbeing can extend to assessing particular conditions which involve the norming of students' physical, cognitive and or psycho-social abilities. Some assessment approaches within schooling, positioned under the banner of student wellbeing, can unhelpfully construct students as either "normal" or "different" (Krieg, 2009; Wright, 2015). For example, through their labelling of students under assessment categories such as "at risk", "ready to learn", or "attention deficit disorder", educators can unwittingly "other" students of difference by constructing deficit positions. Assessment practices which individualise wellbeing through such naming conventions can act to inscribe deficit identity positions upon the labelled person (Reeves, Albert, Kuper, & Hodges, 2008).

Children and young people continue to be assessed and categorised by schools according to their proximity from the norm as part of contemporary schooling practices (Chapman, 2015; Wright, 2015). Such codifying and separating out of students on the basis of wellbeing plays a role in social reproduction of inequality according to Wright (2015) who notes, "educational differences based on the disadvantages of social class were (and still are) individualised and legitimised" (Wright, 2015, p. 206). Ecclestone (2015) contends that in the area of wellbeing, too little regard is given to issues such as social class and race. What these scholars signal is that the classifying and sorting practices which come under the auspices of supporting wellbeing in schools can lead to the labelling of some students as not normal and occurs not only on the basis of ability, but potentially on the basis of social class and race. This study engages with these critiques of wellbeing discourses in attempting to access educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing. These critiques form part of contemporary discourses of wellbeing which are relevant to educators since they share responsibility for student wellbeing. This is an area of much uncertainty as support, training and resourcing for

educators in this aspect of their role is largely absent (Graham, Phelps, Maddison, & Fitzgerald, 2011).

2.2.3 Commodifying wellbeing

There are also claims that wellbeing is becoming a commodified phenomenon, co-opted by capitalist agendas (Ecclestone, 2015; Sennett, 2005). In efforts to support student wellbeing, schools are increasingly turning to commercialised interventions, including wellbeing programs, mindfulness-based interventions and wellbeing centres. Scholars including Hyland (2016) and Spratt (2017) critique this as a neoliberal ideology that acts to harness and manage students' wellbeing in ways that support school competition and rankings (Spratt, 2017). This locates wellbeing within broader neoliberal education agendas in which individualisation, competition and hierarchies are created, widening social inequalities (Harvey, 2007). Student wellbeing approached in this (neoliberal) way can be viewed as part of a capitalist model, favouring market-based models of intervention by specialists and commercial interests employed to solve wellbeing "problems" (again raising the issue of "the wellbeing problem" discourse). A concern which emerges here is that such market-based approaches potentially fail to address the underlying conditions in which poor wellbeing may have surfaced in the classroom in the first instance. Commercial wellbeing "fixes" may take a band-aid approach to dealing with the symptoms of poor wellbeing rather than interrogating and addressing the causes (Simmons et al., 2015). Consequently, well-intended approaches to student wellbeing, unless carefully and critically examined, may have the effect of contributing to the "problem" they set forth to remedy.

These above critiques are illustrative of the complexity of wellbeing, which reflects the complexity of schools, the education system and broader societies in which schools operate (Davis & Sumara, 2006). Alternative discursive formulations are advocated to

reconceptualise wellbeing in generative ways (rather than as a “positive wellbeing/problematic wellbeing” dualism). One recent example of a nuanced way of considering wellbeing that challenges such binary thinking is afforded by McLeod’s (2017, p. 4) post-human account of wellbeing which explores “how wellbeing and illbeing emerge from the assemblages of everyday life”. McLeod (2017) shifts attention from wellbeing as anchored in individual bodies, to instead, emerging from the collective body, offering a counter-hegemonic position to the dominant individualising discourse of wellbeing. McLeod’s conceptualisation of wellbeing as a collective phenomenon is of interest to this study of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities which may have both individual and collective origins and effects.

Largely absent in curriculum policies and broader research of student wellbeing conducted to date are references to cultural aspects of wellbeing, which are the focus of this study. In pursuing an inquiry into cultural wellbeing, I neither consider this idea a dimension of wellbeing nor an overarching framework sitting above other models of wellbeing. Instead, cultural wellbeing is considered as a concept in its own right *as it was interpreted by educators*. Having considered student wellbeing in this section, the inquiry into cultural wellbeing shifts now to considering what I mean by culture.

2.3 Culture

The development of the word “culture” is a record of a number of important and continuing reactions to changes in our social, economic and political life, and may be seen, in itself, as a special kind of map by means of which the nature of the changes can be explored. (Williams, 1985b, pp. xvi–xvii)

Throughout the modern history of its usage, the word “culture” has challenged scholars and theorists as a term which has resisted fixed and stable definitions. Indeed, prominent cultural studies theorist Raymond Williams (1985b) declared the word culture as “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language” (1985a, p. 87). Early meanings of culture connected with the word’s Latin origin, *cultura*, associated with cultivation or tending (Williams, 1985b); therefore from its earliest usage in the English language, culture has been aligned with ideas of nurturance and improvement. Meanings of culture proliferated from its early origins and, by the 1950s, more than 160 meanings of the term had been catalogued (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963).

Different theoretical traditions and their discourses have influenced shifts in meanings of culture, making the word a site of ongoing contestation. In the 1800s the popular reception of Matthew Arnold’s book “Culture and Anarchy” (1869) was influential in the development of a “culture and civilisation” discourse that established an interpretation of culture as a body of knowledge which served as a means of distinction amongst social classes. Arnold’s interpretation of culture, encapsulated in the phrase “the best which has been thought or said in the world” (p. viii), remained a dominant paradigm until the 1950s (Storey, 2015). The emergence of postmodernism in the 1960s brought with it an “incredulity toward metanarratives” (Lyotard, 1984, p. xxiv) which disrupted this dominant paradigm of culture. In its place, a series of subsequent “turns” (cultural, interpretive, semiotic, narrative, discursive) (St.Pierre, 2013) led to a resistance to intended meanings in favour of understanding culture as a site of negotiation (Hall, 1997a). Consequently, meanings of culture remain contested.

The “cultural turn” (McLennan, 2014) led by cultural studies theorists, notably Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams, focused attention on cultural processes and power relations

involved in the construction of meaning. “If culture is a process, a practice, how does it work?” asked Stuart Hall (Hall, 1997c, p. 61), positioning culture as central in global processes of formation and change. Hall points to the “cultural turn” in social analysis as marking the shift to where culture has become a “constitutive condition of the existence of social life, rather than a dependent variable” (Hall, 1997b, p. 220). The global cultural change that is part of what Hall termed “the cultural revolution” has served a crucial role in unshackling culture from its former fixed meanings, producing both homogenising cultural forces and forces of difference in which new “global” and new “local” identifications and cultural hybridities emerge (Hall, 1997b, p. 211).

Williams identifies three broad usages of the term culture:

- As a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development;
- an anthropological definition encompassing “a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general”; and
- “the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity”

(Williams, 1985a, p. 90)

While the three broad meanings of culture described by Williams more than thirty years ago reflect their historical context, they nevertheless offer a departure point for exploring how meanings of the word have evolved. In an updated edition of *New Keywords* (Bennett, Grossberg, & Morris, 2005), the authors drew attention to the expanded range of contexts in which the vocabulary of culture was being employed (beyond the original meanings outlined by Williams twenty years earlier). These relate to “forms of difference”, such as gay culture, ethnic culture and transnational culture, and including a strong association between the concept of culture and lifestyles, “from subcultures and counter-

cultures to club cultures” (Bennett, Grossberg, & Morris, 2005, p. 64). Bennett et al. (2005) further observed that the use of the adjective “cultural” had grown rapidly and is commonly used in terms such as cultural policies, cultural diversity and cultural participation which have become part of government policies in many nations.

“For good or ill, culture is now one of the most dynamic – and most unpredictable – elements of historical change in the new millennium” wrote Stuart Hall near the turn of the twenty first century (1997b, p. 213). This thesis resonates with the “for good” of Hall’s provocation, asking how does culture, as it is variously interpreted, contribute positively to wellbeing? Hall argues that through communication “we are able to build up a shared culture of meanings and thus construct a social world which we inhabit together” (1997c, p. 18). This idea of building shared meanings is central to this study. However, dealing with issues of culture involves more than understanding how people make sense of the world. Such an undertaking involves understanding how meaning frameworks have developed over time, which aligns with cultural studies’ traditions of interrogating power relations underlying the very act of meaning making.

For this study, interrogating such power relations requires engaging with discourses and practices of schooling to understand the power relations at work within this context. According to Nieto (2010), the meanings that are made of culture and the ways culture is thought about have consequences for how the act of schooling takes place. Curriculum and pedagogy expose students to the “norms, values, and the hegemonic ideology of the larger society” (Ghosh, Mickelson, & Anyon, 2007, p. 277). Nieto (2010) argues school curriculum and pedagogy are typically designed as if culture is unchanging. This is problematic because educational practices derived from a view of “culture as static” support the status quo,

continuing past injustices that have been historically experienced by some groups of people in schools.

I employ the term *culture* in a broad sense, as a concept which has multiple and evolving meanings, which include (though are not limited to) people's ways of life, how people identify and recognise each other, and people's participation in practices. Of interest in considering educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing are the ways in which culture informs educators' strategies for action (Swidler, 1986), and Bourdieu's notion that cultural patterns provide structures in which individuals can develop particular strategies.

2.4 Cultural wellbeing

So, what then is cultural wellbeing? How is the expression cultural wellbeing understood and interpreted? Does it refer to culture in terms of the ways of being and interacting together or is it more to do with opportunities of learning about other cultures in the classroom? These questions are illustrative of the types of inquiries that informed this research study and that justified the use of a grounded theory approach which is discussed in the Methodology section.

In a report produced by the Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre in the United Kingdom, Statham and Chase (2010) highlighted the issue of the limited understanding of cultural implications of wellbeing and called for further research. To date, the amount of empirical research evidence relating to cultural wellbeing in the field of schooling is limited. Reviews of literature relating to cultural wellbeing have largely focused on Indigenous populations. For example, reviews by Tomlins-Jahnke (2006) and Thompson-Fawcett and Quigg (2017) explored associations between the cultural wellbeing of Indigenous children and their local places. These authors found that advancing the cultural wellbeing of

Indigenous children necessitates the creation of environments where Indigenous language, knowledge, culture and values are recognised as normal and legitimate.

A growing body of interdisciplinary research literature on cultural wellbeing offers a useful starting point for this study. Cultural wellbeing is a term that has been employed in international development, Aboriginal community development, and health research. Although there is little evidence of theorised definitions and interpretations of cultural wellbeing, this literature review synthesises some common concepts of cultural wellbeing apparent in this international interdisciplinary work.

2.4.1 Themes of cultural wellbeing

Three themes in particular were evident in this review of the reference literature: cultural wellbeing involves connections, relationships and a sense of belonging; participation in social and cultural practices; and finally, cultural wellbeing contributes to overall wellbeing. I outline these broad themes of cultural wellbeing in interdisciplinary research literature and note that there was considerable overlap between themes.

2.4.1.1 Connections, relationships and belonging

Research conducted in the areas of international development and Aboriginal health suggests cultural wellbeing involves healthy connections to people and community, and to country and land. Healthy family, peer and community relationships are foundational for young people's present and future wellbeing (Viner et al., 2012). Such relationships are central to the web of economic, political, social, environmental, and cultural conditions that form the basis for improving wellbeing, as depicted through the Social Determinants of Health framework (Commission on the Social Determinants of Health [CSDH], 2008).

In a published collection of case studies, Rao and Walton (2004) used a “cultural lens” to consider wellbeing in the field of international development. They described culture as “concerned with identity, aspiration, symbolic exchange, ... structures and practices that serve relational ends” among individuals and groups (Rao & Walton, 2004, p. 4). For these authors, a cultural lens serves as a means of opening up questions of power and considering how people employ cultural, social and symbolic resources to foster and support wellbeing within the social order. A focus on culture is necessary, according to Rao and Walton (2004), “to confront the difficult questions of *what is valued* in terms of wellbeing, *who does the valuing*, and *why economic and social factors interact with culture* to unequally allocate access to a good life” (p.4). In positing these questions about the nexus between culture and wellbeing, these authors focus attention on the power relations that are central to making meaning of culture (Hall, 1997a). In research conducted in the United Kingdom, Carlisle, Hanlon, Reilly, Lyon and Henderson (2016) consider the influences of the values of modern culture on wellbeing in Scotland and how such values are socially situated.

In addition to the links between cultural wellbeing and healthy relationships among people, recent research has explored cultural wellbeing and place connection. A growing body of research has reported that a connection to country and land contributes to cultural wellbeing for Aboriginal peoples (Cairney et al., 2017; Dockery, 2017). Connection to place is also emerging in cultural wellbeing research conducted amongst other populations. The concept of place attachment, noted as the “emotional bonds between people and a particular place or environment”, is reported to contribute to wellbeing and personal identity (Seamon, 2013, p. 11). Schooling is both a social and cultural phenomenon involving systems of meaning, values and behavioural norms that are attached to particular relationships and the places in which schools are located (Deal & Peterson, 2010). This underpins the importance of healthy connections to people and places for cultural wellbeing.

2.4.1.2 Participation in social and cultural practices

Cultural connections are likewise identified as integral to cultural wellbeing in reference literature. Particularly noteworthy is the growing acceptance of the positive wellbeing benefits of participation in social and cultural practices (Dockery, 2010; Grossi, Blessi, Sacco, & Buscema, 2012; Pattanaik, 1997; White, 2015; White & Pettit, 2004). Participation takes many forms, and aspects noted in relation to cultural wellbeing include democratic processes (White & Pettit, 2004), empowerment (Rao & Walton, 2004), and the “consumption and production of aesthetic and intellectual products” (Grossi et al., 2012; Pattanaik, 1997).

In Italy, Grossi, Blessi, Sacco and Buscema are studying the relationship between culture and wellbeing at the population level in a longitudinal study, the “Italian Culture and Wellbeing Project” (Grossi et al., 2012). Their particular interpretation of culture centres around participation in cultural activities, including theatre performances, exhibitions, concerts, book reading and practicing sport. The research has reported tentative evidence of a positive association between cultural participation and self-reported health and wellbeing, which the authors have referred to as a “culture/wellbeing positive feedback dynamic” (Blessi, Grossi, Sacco, Pieretti, & Ferilli, 2016). The idea of a culture/wellbeing positive dynamic is one that underpins a recent trend in England of “Arts on Prescription” schemes (Bungay & Clift, 2010; Chatterjee, Camic, Lockyer, & Thomson, 2017). Acknowledging the “profound relationship between culture, health and wellbeing” (Department for Culture Media & Sport, 2016, p. 13), the United Kingdom Government is encouraging increased public participation across England’s cultural sectors of the arts, museums and galleries, libraries, and heritage.

Participation in social and cultural practices includes processes of identity formation and symbolic exchange. The formation of cultural identity is linked to wellbeing (Department for Children Education Lifelong Learning and Skills, 2008; Siraj & Clarke, 2000). Studies have found that positive cultural identity can develop through community cultural development, particularly through sharing stories and participation in the arts (Mills & Brown, 2004; VicHealth, 2013). According to Hall (1997a), making and communicating meaning through such cultural activities are symbolic practices of exchange; i.e., the processes through which people can come to appreciate themselves and others, and through which identity claims are made. The emphasis on participation alludes to the innate potential for people to be active agents in the construction of cultural wellbeing, however Rao and Walton (2004) also describe problematic aspects such as token participation, and the potential for disempowerment to limit people's opportunity and capacities to participate.

2.4.1.3 Links between cultural wellbeing and overall wellbeing

In Western discursive constructions of wellbeing, culture remains largely absent or on the periphery to other wellbeing dimensions. By comparison, Indigenous scholars contend culture is an inherent and integral component of wellbeing. Indigenous scholar Professor Ngaire Brown recently advocated that cultural determinants of health “originate from and promote a strength-based perspective, acknowledging that stronger connections to culture and country build stronger individual and collective identities, a sense of self-esteem, resilience, and improved outcomes across the other determinants of health including education, economic stability and community safety” (Brown, 2014). This cultural approach is contrasted with the social determinants of health model which Brown contends accepts inequalities and takes a deficit view of Aboriginality. Cultural determinants of wellbeing

instead recognise strong connections to culture and cultural identity as protective factors (Dockery, 2017) that also contribute to educational outcomes (Dockery, 2010).

Research into Aboriginal children's health in Australian communities found participants' descriptions of physical, social and emotional aspects of children's health and wellbeing "were strongly grounded in cultural wellbeing" (Priest, MacKean, Davis, Briggs, & Waters, 2012, p. 187). This finding was echoed in Day and Francisco's (2013) systematic review of empirical evidence from research of Indigenous health programs targeting the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. An Aboriginal concept of health is holistic in that it encompasses mental health along with physical, cultural and spiritual health according to Swan and Raphael (1995) who clarify, "This holistic concept does not just refer to the whole body but is steeped in harmonised inter-relations which constitute *cultural wellbeing*" (Swan & Raphael, 1995, p. 19 emphasis added).

This review highlights some understandings of cultural wellbeing as they have been constructed and employed across a range of disciplines both in Australia and internationally. In the next section the review of literature shifts to the field of schooling where there is some evidence emerging of potential convergences of culture, wellbeing and learning.

2.4.2 Cultural wellbeing in schooling

This study adds to research already conducted on cultural wellbeing in above-mentioned reference disciplines, which include community health and international development by focusing on cultural wellbeing in education. School communities significantly influence children's wellbeing (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 2012; Fraillon, 2004). Students, teachers, teacher assistants, parents and families, and the wider community

play a critical role in children's wellbeing in the classroom space (Graetz et al., 2008). Rogoff (2003) contends that "humans develop through their changing participation in the sociocultural activities of their communities, which also change" (p. 368). This provokes the question of how might cultural wellbeing develop through children's participation in the changing sociocultural activities of their school classroom community? To further explore how culture is presently addressed within schooling in Australia, in the next section I consider curriculum policy discourses.

2.4.2.1 Culture and schooling in Australia

The Australian Curriculum signals two important framings of culture through the *cross-curriculum priorities* and the *general capabilities* which can be read as curriculum discourses of culture. The cross-curriculum priorities [CCPs] in the Australian Curriculum are presented as supporting students to "engage with and better understand their world at a range of levels" (ACARA, 2016b), and two CCPs in particular have a strong focus on culture:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, which according to the Curriculum "will enrich all learners' ability to participate positively in the ongoing development of Australia through a deepening knowledge and connection with the world's oldest continuous living cultures." (ACARA, 2016b Cross Curriculum Priorities)
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, which builds students' "knowledge and understanding of Asian societies, cultures, beliefs and environments, and the connections between the peoples of Asia, Australia, and the rest of the world" (ACARA, 2016b Cross Curriculum Priorities)

These CCPs are two key reference points for how culture is conceptualised in the curriculum. The discursive policy construction which singles out both “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures” and “Asian cultures” through the mechanism of the CCPs perpetuates a particular discourse of culture. The curriculum in this way depicts these cultures as separate to, distinct from, or “other” than mainstream cultures. Nieto (2010) contends that existing hegemonies remain unchallenged if culture remains largely “invisible” to people from dominant sociocultural groups for whom culture is what is “normal”. For instance, Strathern (2012) tells us that we all have culture, but through the naming of particular cultures, discourses of culture constructed by the Australian Curriculum may serve to maintain a cultural blindness among students from dominant cultures.

Centring attention on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culture is an important step in recognising the country’s Indigenous peoples. Indeed, a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures is vital in a contemporary context where Indigenous people experience ongoing trauma and disparities in life outcomes as part of the consequence of colonisation and dispossession. The concern expressed here is with the ways the curriculum might construct understandings of culture that reinforce static interpretations of the concept. This may occur through reifying properties of particular groups of people (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) or restaging exhausted ideas of culture as “the exotic other” (Hall, 1997a) and ignoring newer understandings of culture as negotiated, fluid and a dynamically changing concept. More problematic is the potential that leaving unexamined the larger questions of culture may reproduce culturally alienating power structures in schools (Borrero, Yeh, Cruz, & Suda, 2012).

Further, the interrogation of discourses of culture in the Australian Curriculum brings into view the framing of the general capability of intercultural understanding (ACARA,

2016b). The elaboration depicts intercultural understanding as the cultivation of mutual respect stating “students learn to respect and appreciate their own cultures and beliefs and those of others” (ACARA, 2016b). The elaboration notes that in the school context intercultural understanding “involves students learning about the diversity of languages, institutions and practices and developing perspectives on complex issues related to global diversity.” While these are worthwhile learning pursuits, the discourses that are constructed under this framing appear to have an arm’s length distance to more contemporary and fluid interpretations of culture. The discursive formulation of intercultural understanding is one of “learning about” rather than “engaging with” culture.

The framing of culture in both the CCPs and the general capability of intercultural understanding offers departure points for considering the concept of cultural wellbeing against the backdrop of ongoing curriculum change. This study enquires into the ways that cultural wellbeing is interpreted in school contexts. Rather than seeking to fix meanings, the heuristic of cultural wellbeing is employed to examine diverse perceptions of culture in relation to student wellbeing.

2.5 Conclusion

Cultural wellbeing is a term increasingly being employed within research and literature, but as this literature review has demonstrated, it is interpreted in multiple ways and there is little theorisation of the concept. Both culture and wellbeing are encompassed within the Australian Curriculum, yet this review has identified limitations in curriculum approaches.

The complexity of the concepts of culture and wellbeing presents a barrier to better understanding cultural aspects of wellbeing. A grounded theory of cultural wellbeing is

therefore opportune and timely in the field of schooling research where wellbeing is of growing interest. This study represents a foray into this little-known area through accessing educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing within classroom communities. The following chapter details the methodology and methods to be employed.

Chapter 3

Methodology and methods

This chapter details the methodology and methods for the study, which brings together constructivist grounded theory with situational analysis. This combination of methodologies is a relatively recent innovation in grounded theory research (Clarke, 2005), particularly in the field of education. After introducing the theoretical underpinnings of the methodology, this chapter outlines the mapping approach employed in the data analysis.

This research is a study of educators' perceptions of, and practices relating to, cultural wellbeing in classroom communities. A primary aim of the research is to draw on the perceptions and perspectives of educators as a foundation for theorising cultural wellbeing. This informed the choice of a grounded theory methodology which seeks to create new ways of understanding knowledge (Charmaz, 2014). In this chapter, I present an account of the methodology for addressing the research aims framed by the following research questions:

Research question 1:

What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?

Research question 2:

How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

A later research question which evolved reflexively through data analysis stages is

Research question 3:

What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?

In this chapter, I describe the emergent nature of this research study and its theoretical underpinnings to depict the interwoven nature of the research questions, methodology and forms of analysis that were employed. I also describe the research process that, at a later stage, led to the introduction of a third research question.

This is a study of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities with relation to *the social field of schooling* (Bourdieu, 1985). My research is embedded in a social constructionist epistemology, which assumes the participants in this study will have developed knowledge of their classroom communities through their daily interactions within that social field (Burr, 2015). Additionally, their *understandings* of that knowledge will be informed by their *subjective interpretations* of their lived experience in that same social field (Dillon, 2014a, p. 306). Educators discursively constructed meanings of cultural wellbeing during their interview experience. They drew upon the knowledge and understandings they brought with them into the study, assembling those understandings into emergent perceptions of cultural wellbeing (Hall 1997c). Creating opportunities for educators to articulate and share visions and interpretations of cultural wellbeing is part of the critical purpose of this study which explores how people make meaning of concepts and how such meanings become shared (Dillon, 2014b).

3.1 Research paradigm: Symbolic interactionism

This study was conducted in an *interactionist paradigm*, the underpinning premises of which are founded in symbolic interactionism. This sociological perspective focuses on the

role of human interaction “in the creation, maintenance, and transformation of culture” (Davetian, 2010, p. 909). Symbolic interactionism views the meanings people form as being derived from their interactions with other people and assumes that language and symbols are central to the meanings that people form and share (Charmaz, 2014).

Symbolic interactionism further recognises that meanings arise from people’s practices and that groups of people who take part in common practices often share goals and hold shared meanings relating to those practices (Charmaz, 2014). Educators (comprising teachers and other workers in classrooms) are a group of people whose work in classroom communities involves them in many common practices that relate to their roles of teaching students and being participants in a schooling system. Symbolic interactionism focuses on participants’ perspectives, encompassing both *spoken and unspoken* shared language and meanings (Charmaz, 2014, emphasis added).

Denzin described symbolic interactionism as the study of “intersections of interaction, biography, and social structure in a particular historic moment” (Denzin, 2008, p. 20). Studying such intersections involves reflection and discussion with others and sharing of life experiences (Crooks, 2001). Noting the dynamism inherent within interactions and the struggle to make meaning of self and life experiences, Crooks contends “people do not come to know themselves directly but only through play, social interaction, reflection, and putting themselves in the position of the interacting individual” (2001, p. 14). Gaining insight into these meanings calls for methodologies that provide opportunities for educators to reflect on these meanings. Grounded theory, through its close alignment with symbolic interactionism and its focus on human agency, language, and interpretation (Reynolds & Herman-Kinney, 2003), facilitates gaining insight into educators’ subjective realities.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Constructivist grounded theory

Constructivist grounded theory is a contemporary iteration of the grounded theory approach to research initially described by Glaser and Strauss (1967). There are many versions of grounded theory (Flick, 2009), and this study employs a contemporary approach to constructivist grounded theory methodology as described by Charmaz (2014), combined with situational analysis (Clarke, 2005). Studies employing constructivist grounded theory methodology and situational analysis in combination are becoming more frequent in health sciences disciplines (Mills, Chapman, Bonner, & Francis, 2007), but are still uncommon in the field of education research (Clarke, 2005). The combined approach is detailed below.

Grounded theory is useful for exploring social relationships and the behaviour of groups of people (Crooks, 2001) and offers a way of valuing the situated perspectives and the contexts of educators. Constructivist grounded theory methodology shares the social constructionist epistemology of symbolic interactionism which views social reality as “multiple, processual, and constructed” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 13) and adopts an emergent and inductive approach arising from interaction between the researcher and participants. Constructivist grounded theory methodology recognises participants as developers of theoretical concepts and emphasises the importance of theoretical potentialities from contributions of participants deeply immersed in the situation under investigation. The researcher’s perspective is also acknowledged as part of the interpretive process of constructing and interpreting the data (Charmaz, 2014). Accordingly, the researcher’s experience and prior research are a recognised source of sensitising concepts which may serve as “points of departure for studying the empirical world while retaining the openness for exploring it” (p. 31).

The underpinning objective of constructivist grounded theory is to theorise from participants' perspectives, and Charmaz (2014, p. 17) is explicit that any theoretical rendering produced through constructivist grounded theory methods "offers an interpretive portrayal of the studied world, not an exact picture of it". In-depth qualitative interviewing fits well with constructivist grounded theory to elicit subjective viewpoints (Charmaz, 2001) and the methodology draws upon a flexible array of methods (Charmaz, 2014). These include theoretical sampling; iterative collection and analysis cycles to pursue emerging themes; constant comparative analysis; and memo writing to generate interpretive theories (Kennedy & Lingard, 2006). The purpose of theoretical sampling is to gain data to help explicate the categories in the grounded theorising and to narrow the focus on emerging categories to form a loose frame for the research (Charmaz, 2014). Sampling decisions are based on researcher's perceptions of who will be able to inform the emerging theorisation and a diverse array of influences may contribute to the decisions of who to interview next in the constructivist grounded theory process (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005).

The initial research proposal was for the study to be conducted employing constructivist grounded theory, however the research situation that emerged became more complex and brought forth other challenges which required methodological solutions. This led to the addition of situational analysis to address research question 2, when silences, contradictions and recurrences in the data led to the use of situational analysis mapping techniques to aid the analysis.

Furthermore, the employment of situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) facilitates the acknowledgement and eliciting of simultaneous existence of multiple perspectives. Therefore, overlaying constructivist grounded theory with situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) serves to ensure that educators' situated perceptions and experiences for informing theory

development are more authentically represented. This aided in addressing the critique that constructivist grounded theory retains some positivist traces, particularly its emphasis on locating a “basic social process” (Charmaz, 2014) in the data. Clarke (2005) argues that the pursuit of one specific process lacks reflexivity and ignores ambiguity and contradictions in its effort to arrive at a conclusive formal theory.

Combining situational analysis with constructivist grounded theory enables more situation-specific *theorising* which accommodates ambiguity and contradictions without necessarily aiming to “explain” these differences through a substantive theory (Clarke, 2005; den Outer, Handley, & Price, 2013). This combined methodological package helps engage with the complexity within the situation of this study through the contributions of constructivist grounded theory in connecting with educators’ experiences, and the multi-layered analytical affordances of situational analysis.

In alignment with the idea that multiple interpretations are possible in social constructionism, I offer the interpretation of cultural wellbeing presented in this thesis as *one of many possible interpretations*. I have sought to provide sufficient transparency in the methodology relating to the data generation and analysis, such that this may be received as a trustworthy account of cultural wellbeing.

3.2.2 Situational analysis

Situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) was specifically designed as a methodology to explore the complex relationships in data. “Situational analysis requires what is present in the situation and, more pertinently, what operates as conditions, to be empirically discernible and traceable within the data” (James, 2013, p. 38). Situational analysis employs situational mapping as a technique for deepening the analysis and rendering visible the differences

between the participants' perspectives. In this respect, situational analysis departs from former qualitative research approaches which analysed interview data (for instance) with a focus on the "knowing subject". Instead, situational analysis seeks to examine and make visible the discursive rules or discourses through which knowledges are produced (Clarke, 2005).

"Situational maps" are used to draw on data to highlight the major human, non-human, discursive, and other elements influencing a situation, as framed by participants in their interviews as well as by the analyst (Clarke, 2003, p. 559). The preliminary map, called the "abstract situational map (messy/working version)" is produced alongside the analysis of the interviews, is deliberately messy, and changes as the data analysis progresses (p. 562). The messy map becomes the basis for the production of the "ordered version of the situational map" which is useful for creating a larger view of the topics (p. 564). "Social Worlds/Arenas maps" are useful for revealing the structures, organisations and networks of relations that are active between the elements in the situation. Social worlds are "groups with shared commitment to certain activities sharing resources of many kinds to achieve their goals" (Clarke, 2005, p. 45). Social worlds, such as the teaching occupation, generate shared perspectives and their own socially constructed universe of discourse (p. 46).

Critiquing ecological models (such as Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model) for failing to depict what is in the situation with sufficient clarity, Clarke offers the mapping tools of situational analysis as a strategy for analytically re-grounding structural conditions in situations of concern. Asserting that "the conditions **of** the situation are **in** the situation", Clarke eschews distinguishing between causal, intervening and contextual conditions in a situation (2005, p. 71 emphasis in original). Instead, situational analysis focuses attention on presences and absences and works on the assumption "that everything in the situation both

constitutes and affects most everything else in the situation... [and] each and all can be present and mutually consequential” (2005, p. 72).

3.2.3 Methodology summary

Constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis formed the methodology for this research providing ways of exploring educators’ situated perspectives of cultural wellbeing. Table 3.1 illustrates the linkage between the methodologies adopted and the research questions posed and articulates the research challenges that the emergent methodology helped to address. This table broadly depicts the chronology of the study, commencing with the research questions, the initial choice of methodology and reason for the suitability of that methodology. In this section, I outlined the theoretical perspective underpinning the research and the methodological approaches of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) employed for exploring the nascent topic of cultural wellbeing in schooling. The next section details the methods employed in the study.

Table 3.1 Research questions and challenges

Research Question	Methodology	What problem was I solving?	Outcomes	Relevant Documents/Items
<i>1. What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?</i>	Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014)	Researching in an under-theorised area, I sought a methodology that would support me to theorise from educators' perceptions.	An analysis of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities. (Chapter 5)	Consent form (Appendix B) Question sheet (Appendix C) Sample interview transcripts (Appendix D)
<i>2. How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?</i>	Situational analysis (Clarke, 2005)	As educators' responses were analysed, it became apparent that there were multiple and varied influences on their capacity to support cultural wellbeing. Situational mapping was employed in order to make sense of and structure these influences.	Theorising cultural wellbeing and social locations. (Chapter 6) Employing social and cultural theories including Bourdieu's theory of social practice (1990), and theories of recognition (Honneth, 1996, 2004) to theorise cultural wellbeing.	Messy situational map; ordered situational map; Social worlds/arenas analysis map. (See Section 4.2.3)
<i>3. What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?</i> <i>(This research question emerged during the study).</i>	Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014); Situational analysis (Clarke, 2005)	It became apparent that multiple interrelated and interdependent forces combined to create conditions in which educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing had been informed. I decided a typology could help depict the source of these forces and their relationships to the educator.	Proposing a typology of cultural wellbeing: a framework to describe the processes of cultural wellbeing developed from the analysis in this study. (Chapter 7)	Typology of cultural wellbeing (Chapter 7)

3.3 Methods

In the following section, I outline how grounded theory methods were employed in the study to support the processes of data generation and analysis. This study employed constructivist grounded theory approaches including theoretical sampling; iterative collection and analysis cycles to pursue emerging themes; constant comparative analysis; and, memo writing to generate interpretive theories (Kennedy & Lingard, 2006). A two-part literature review supported the initial development of the research project and subsequent theorising from the findings. Data was sourced from interviews conducted with educators across a range of education settings, as well as from memos written throughout the research. I outline these methods below.

3.3.1 Research Aim and Research Questions

Through this research project, I sought to contribute to theorisations of student wellbeing, in particular by seeking to understand the influences of culture (variously interpreted). Thus, the aim of the research was to embrace diverse and situated perspectives of cultural wellbeing amongst educators to enhance understandings of how culture contributes to wellbeing. This research did not seek to arrive at a singular definition of cultural wellbeing, nor did it seek to privilege any one particular interpretation of cultural wellbeing.

3.3.2 Data sources

The theoretical and methodological positioning of this study called for a qualitative inquiry approach. The data sources included interviews with teachers and educators, and memoing, both of which observed constructivist grounded theory principles and methods. In

the following sections I detail the approaches taken to conducting the interviews which formed the substantive data source for this study. Later in the chapter, I introduce the memoing method as a source of data. I include sample memos to demonstrate how these data sources enabled me to gain insights into educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing.

3.3.2.1 Interviews with educators

The data for this study was gathered by conducting individual semi-structured interviews with 15 educators between January 2015 and January 2017. The decision to include educators from both primary and secondary schools was made on the basis that the concept of cultural wellbeing is relatively new in the field of schooling, therefore a wide range of perspectives was sought, including across grade levels.

Research Participants

In this section, I introduce the participating educators I interviewed for this study. A summary table (Table 3.2) provides some information about the school contexts of the educators. Pseudonyms are employed to protect participants' confidentiality.

Table 3.2 Participants' details

Pseudonym	Status	School ICSEA	School type/context	Discipline	Yr. level	Notes
Valerie	Arts educator	<900	State K-12	Cultural arts	4 - 6	Valerie and Kathryn co-deliver a cultural arts program for Aboriginal girls in a K-12 state school in a small town
Kathryn	Arts educator	<900	State primary	Cultural arts	4 - 6	
Dan	Teacher	>1100	Independent K-12	Outdoor education	K-12	Dan is a specialist outdoor education teacher in a K-12 independent school
Natalie	Teacher	n/a	Middle school	Teacher	6	Natalie is a middle school teacher currently working in a relief role in multiple state schools
Mary	Teacher	1000-1049	Catholic secondary	Humanities, Religion	7 - 10	Mary teaches across a range of subjects in a Catholic secondary school located in a regional town
Belinda	Project manager	n/a	Kitchen garden project	Arts/gardening	P-6	Belinda is the project manager for a kitchen garden project implemented in multiple low SES state primary schools
Kirsty	Teacher	950-999	State P-10	Arts	P-10	Kirsty is the visual arts teacher in a P-10 state school
Ryan	Teacher	>1100	Independent K-12	Aust Studies, history	7 - 10	Ryan teaches across a range of subjects including Australian studies and history in the senior years of a K-12 independent school
Beth	Teacher	>1100	Christian K-12	English	7 - 10	Beth is Head of secondary English in a K-12 Christian college and teaches English across secondary year levels
Chelsea	Teacher	>1100	State primary	Kindergarten	K	Chelsea is a kindergarten teacher in a state primary school in a high SES suburb
Charles	Arts educator	900-949	State primary	Arts	Prep	Stella and Charles are co-producers of an arts intervention for prep year students in a state primary school in a low SES town.
Stella	Arts educator	900-949	State primary	Arts	Prep	
Rick	Teacher	<900	State primary	General	5 - 6	Rick is a year 5/6 teacher in a state primary school located in a low SES suburb
Lauren	Teacher	<900	State primary	Prep	Prep	Lauren is a prep teacher in a low SES state school in a metropolitan city's outer suburb
Jacky	Teacher	1000-1049	State primary	Science	P-6	Jacky teaches specialist discovery science in a suburban primary state school

Note. Participants designated as arts educators are arts practitioners working in an arts education context. By contrast, art teachers are registered teachers.

Sampling of Participants

Following methods described by Charmaz (2014) and Morse (2007) I employed a combination of purposeful, snowball and theoretical sampling methods in choosing participants for interviews. Purposeful sampling was chosen to help maximise the variation of meanings of cultural wellbeing by seeking participants who could provide a rich description of events and concepts to help determine the scope of the phenomena being studied (Morse, 2007). Snowball sampling involves the researcher seeking from initial participants suggestions of who else might be able to provide insights into particular events or concepts (Morse, 2007). Theoretical sampling, a key method of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), involves participants or other data sources being selected purposefully as the research progresses “for their ability to provide data that would confirm, challenge or expand an emerging theory” (Kennedy & Lingard, 2006, p. 104).

Thematic concepts of cultural wellbeing identified in the literature review (section 2.4.1) were the basis for selecting the *first four participants* in the study as Table 3.3 details. These thematic concepts included connections, relationships and belonging; participation in social and cultural practices; and links between cultural wellbeing and overall wellbeing. These first four educators were selected through purposeful and snowball sampling (Morse, 2007) from a shortlist of identified educators where these thematic concepts appeared to be an important aspect of their teaching practice.

This shortlist was comprised of teaching contacts known to me as associates from previous research projects and from suggestions offered by members of the supervision team and other advisors. For example, the purposeful selection of Valerie was informed by my consultation with an Aboriginal Elder in Residence at the university at the commencement of the study. She recommended meeting with arts educator Valerie and briefly described

Valerie's practice, which resonated with the initial thematic concepts mentioned above. Through my research interactions with Valerie I was introduced to her colleague educator, Kathryn, who similarly focused on students' participation in social and cultural practices and supporting students to form strong connections. Therefore, the selection of Kathryn as a participant followed snowball sampling methods.

I selected participants Dan and Natalie following purposeful sampling methods to explore initial ideas related to cultural wellbeing. This process accords with what Charmaz (2014) describes as using *sensitising concepts* as a source of initial but tentative ideas to pursue in a grounded theory study. Sensitising concepts can inform the selection of participants and serve as a source of questions to raise about processes that researchers define in their data (p. 30). Charmaz notes that graduate students may have already developed some vantage points from which to view data from their previous research, as was the case in this study.

Sensitising concepts based on my previous research into intersections between arts learning and sustainability education (e.g. Emery, 2013) were sources of initial ideas and questions in this research. Reflecting on questions that surfaced from this earlier research, I was curious, for example, about whether the oft-noted "meaning-making" qualities of arts learning pedagogies are relevant to cultural wellbeing in classroom communities. Further, how (if at all) do the social justice orientations and qualities of critical thinking which underlie sustainability learning contribute to processes of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

I perceived that sustainability learning approaches accorded with concepts of connections, relationships and wellbeing which appeared integral to cultural wellbeing, and this was the basis for the purposeful sampling of Dan. During a teacher professional

development event I met Natalie and learned of her emphasis on celebrating students' cultural backgrounds in the classroom which I perceived could inform understandings about social and cultural practices.

Tables 3.4 and 3.5 outline the theoretical sampling of further participants in the study in accordance with the descriptive needs of the emerging theories and concepts relating to educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing. After the initial four participants were interviewed (details of the interview process are below), preliminary data analysis suggested that the socioeconomic levels of schools were playing an important role in how educators were resourcing this interplay between culture and wellbeing. However, the initial participants did not represent a sufficiently wide range of socio-economic levels to explore this topic in the data. The first two educators offered insight into one low SES state school, the third educator taught in a high SES non-government school, and the fourth participant taught across multiple schools. Therefore, to develop theoretical insights into the influences of capital, particularly cultural capital as described by Bourdieu (1984), participants from schools from socio-economically diverse locations were sought, and from across different schooling sectors. This resulted in the recruitment of Mary (mid-range SES school), Lauren, Belinda, Rick (all low SES schools) and Beth and Chelsea (both high SES schools) as table 3.4 below shows.

In addition to selecting participants to theorise the influence of school socio-economic status on educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing, theoretical sampling enabled exploration of the concept of cultural wellbeing in relation to different teaching approaches. For example, one of the concepts that appeared striking in the data was healthy connections to people, places and culture. Here the selection of art teacher Kirsty was influenced by her participation in a previous research project where I learned that she often involved

community artists and connection with community arts events in her teaching practice. It was apparent that teaching approaches which emphasised relational processes (similar to that employed by Charles and Stella in their intergenerational billy cart making project) could help me develop the themes of healthy connections, cultural participation and cultural wellbeing.

Inquiry learning was a further teaching approach I sought to explore in relation to cultural wellbeing, to learn more about the benefits of an active engagement in learning. This led to the theoretical sampling of two teachers who were identified by others as having useful experience in teaching using inquiry approaches: science teacher Jacky, who was suggested in a brainstorming session with my supervisors, and Australian Studies teacher, Ryan who I recruited through snowball sampling based on the suggestion of participant Dan.

Table 3.5 below provides further details about the basis for the theoretical sampling of participants.

Tables 3.2 – 3.5 offer contextual background for the selection of each participant. Explaining the participant sampling in this way may suggest this was a simple and neat process, however it was a much messier process than the tables imply. For example, participants who were selected primarily for their potential in providing insights about influences of socio-economic levels also were chosen for insights their teaching approaches could bring. Equally, participants who were chosen primarily for the rich information their teaching approaches could bring to the study, came from schools of differing socio-economic levels and this information further contributed to the understandings developed through this study. Therefore, I have provided educators' notes to explain some of the details of their backgrounds where available.

Table 3.3 Selection of the first four participants based on concepts from literature

Participant	School profile	Educator profile	Selection process for this participant	Connections, relationships and belonging	Participation in social and cultural practices	Links between cultural wellbeing and overall wellbeing
Valerie	Low SES (ICSEA < 900) K-12 state school in a low SES regional town. The school has partnerships with community service organisations and offers breakfast club for students and other programs to support student wellbeing.	Valerie is an Aboriginal arts educator who works with community organisations and delivers arts programs to Aboriginal students deemed to be at risk of disengaging from education.	I approached Valerie following a recommendation from an Aboriginal Elder in Residence I consulted with prior to beginning the study. Valerie employs both contemporary and traditional Aboriginal arts practices in her teaching.	Valerie bases her classroom practice on a yarnning circle format, building skills and cultural knowledge together.	Arts approaches in a safe supportive environment.	Through the cultural practices of the yarnning circle and art making class, Valerie supports Aboriginal students' emotional wellbeing in school.
Kathryn	Low SES (ICSEA < 900) K-12 state school in a low SES regional town. The school has partnerships with community service organisations and offers breakfast club for students and other programs to support student wellbeing.	Kathryn works with Valerie, employing arts approaches to deliver wellbeing and educational outcomes. Kathryn is a non-Aboriginal youth worker and artist who is engaged within primary schools to connect students with programs that can support their wellbeing and progress within schools.	I met Kathryn through Valerie and through conversation learned that Kathryn employed approaches which support students from trauma backgrounds. I subsequently invited Kathryn to participate in the study.	Kathryn's trauma-informed practice emphasises connecting with students and their families to understand their background and home life.	Arts approaches	Through building relationships in classes, Kathryn monitors students' wellbeing and connects them to health and social services to support their wellbeing.
Dan	High SES (ICSEA > 1100) Independent K-12 school in a regional city. The school is located across multiple campuses.	Dan engages students in Outdoor Education programs which have students from K-12 engaging in active, hands-on initiatives in a range of different environments.	The decision to invite Dan arose through discussion with supervisors of sustainability educators we were aware of. We perceived that Dan's outdoor education practice could reveal insights about connections and relationships that form through engaging students in nature.	Dan arranges outdoor education experiences which may foster connections between students and nature.	Sustainability education principles and outdoor education pedagogies.	The outdoor education program is promoted as supporting students' overall health and wellbeing.
Natalie	Natalie teaches across multiple primary schools.	Natalie is a relief teacher, and previously taught a Year 6 class. Natalie has a deep interest in music and folk culture which she connects with her Eastern European heritage.	Informal conversation at a teacher professional development event led me to invite Natalie to participate in the study due to her emphasis on celebrating students' cultural backgrounds in the classroom.	Natalie invites students to share and celebrate their cultural connections and ethnic customs in the classroom.	Community and cultural celebrations in the classroom.	A teaching orientation that emphasises inclusion of all students.

Table 3.4 Selection of participants to explore influence of school socio-economic level

Participant	School socio-economic profile	Educator profile	Educator notes
Mary	Mid-range SES (ICSEA 1000-1049) Catholic secondary school	Subject specific teacher of sociology and psychology	Mary has taught at her present school for more than 20 years and as a result knows the students well. She also knows their families, often having taught students' siblings in previous years. Mary appears to have a deep connection with students and was therefore considered to have the potential to offer insights into relational processes. For example, during her interview, Mary spoke of attending the Anzac Day dawn service in the town and recalled students coming up to her and introducing their families to her.
Lauren	Low SES (ICSEA < 900) state primary school	Prep teacher	Lauren is from a low SES state school and was selected to help provide further information about the effects of school socioeconomic status.
Belinda	Low SES state primary schools (multiple schools, various ICSEA)	Project manages a school garden project designed specifically for primary school students in low SES communities.	In addition to managing the kitchen garden project, (at the time of the interview) Belinda was a practicing general practitioner (GP) and artist in the local area. She indicated that the prevalence of poor health in the local community which she witnessed as a GP was influential in her involvement in the kitchen garden program. Through the program she aimed to impact students' early attitudes and skills about healthy eating and I perceived that Belinda could provide insights into connections between cultural wellbeing and overall wellbeing.
Rick	Low SES (ICSEA < 900) state primary school in a low SES suburb of a regional city. The school has partnerships with multiple community service organisations and offers breakfast club for students and other programs to support student wellbeing.	A year 5/6 teacher	I became aware of Rick's strong relationship with students through another research project. Rick teaches in a low SES state school and has built strong relationships with students through connecting with their lives beyond the classroom. For example, he has taken students out on excursions to the local basketball stadium and has spoken of going with the school principal and a group of school boys to the local skate park to build relationships with these students. In addition to Rick teaching in a low SES school and being able to further inform the study about the effects of SES, through these aforementioned initiatives, I perceived that Rick was able to provide insights into valuing students' non-dominant forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1984).
Beth	High SES (ICSEA > 1100) Christian college in metropolitan location. This was a large school with more than 2000 students, and a relatively high proportion of student of culturally diverse backgrounds.	Head of English and secondary English teacher	Beth teaches in a high SES independent school. Perceiving differences in the accounts coming from educators in government (state) and non-government schools and schools of different socioeconomic status, I sought to include perspectives from educators such as Beth who could provide further insight into how teaching in a high SES school influences how educators support cultural wellbeing.
Chelsea	High SES (ICSEA > 1100) state primary school.	Kindergarten teacher	To better understand differences in the accounts of educators in government (state) and non-government schools and schools of different socioeconomic status, I selected Chelsea since she was from a high SES state school. I perceived that having educators from high SES state (Chelsea) and non-government schools (ie. Beth, Dan, Ryan) would provide further insights into effects of SES.

Table 3.5 Selection of participants to explore emerging theoretical concepts

Participant	School profile	Educator profile	Educator's teaching approaches
Kirsty	K-10 state school located in a rural town.	Teaches art to students across all grades.	Kirsty's approach to teaching arts education has a strong emphasis on community involvement and I perceived this could inform insights into connections between cultural participation and cultural wellbeing. I was aware of Kirsty's arts teaching practice from a previous education research project.
Jacky	Mid-range SES (ICSEA 1000-1049). State primary school in a suburb of a regional city.	A specialist science teacher.	Jacky is a science teacher who has developed a profile as a highly engaging science communicator, particularly through her popular 'National Science Week' workshops. I selected Jacky for her insights about participatory and inquiry learning approaches, which I perceived could add insights about how teaching approaches might support cultural wellbeing.
Ryan	High SES (ICSEA > 1100) K-12 Independent school in a regional city. The school is located across multiple campuses.	Teaches Australian studies and other subjects to students in Year 7-10.	Ryan was suggested as a potential participant by Dan (participant 3), who had worked previously with Ryan. Dan emphasised Ryan's ways of engaging students in deep and sustained inquiry learning. My initial conversation with Ryan suggested he could inform understandings about teaching critical thinking approaches which actively engage secondary students in classroom communities and support building relationships with students.
Charles and Stella	Low SES (ICSEA < 950) state primary school in a regional town.	The producer and director (respectively) of an arts organisation which has been responsible for developing and delivering a school-community arts intervention.	From an earlier research project, I was aware that the arts program that Charles and Stella delivered in partnership with primary schools brought local community members in to the school grounds to work with prep students on a 'maker' project. An evaluation report of their projects suggested their program was influencing school culture in the early years of schooling where their projects were delivered. I perceived that their arts approaches could add insights about relational processes of engaging community within schools and how this might support cultural wellbeing.

Participant recruitment

After potential participants were identified through the procedures outlined above, I emailed each educator an invitation to participate in the study. An information sheet and consent form (Appendix B) accompanied the email and educators signalled their consent to participate by returning the signed consent form. I arranged a mutually agreeable time for the interview to be conducted at a venue of the participants' choice. Most interviews were conducted in the school setting with the following exceptions; three of the interviews were conducted at education conferences (Natalie, Beth, Chelsea), two interviews were conducted in café venues which the participant nominated as a convenient site (Jacky, Kirsty) and one interview was conducted by phone (Lauren).

Ethical Considerations

This study involved research conducted with teachers and educators who participated on a voluntary basis. The research was conducted in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Health and Medical Research Council [NHMRC], 2007) through seeking informed consent from participants.

The research study involved non-Indigenous and Indigenous participants. I sought to include perspectives of Aboriginal educators, therefore in preparing the ethics application for the study, I wrote a response to the document "Values and ethics: Guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research" (2003) (see 0). During the research design phase I consulted research methods literature that shares Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on the conduct of ethical research (for example, Moreton-Robinson & Walter, 2009).

Before conducting interviews, I met with the then Elder-in-Residence at the University of Tasmania to discuss this study. In observance of the principles of ethical conduct of research, I invited participants to co-publish and co-present the findings in scholarly publications and at education conferences.

The interview process

The aim of the interviews was to access educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in relation to their individual lived experiences. A semi-structured interview method was chosen for the flexibility it provided in enabling me to adjust aspects of the questioning to accommodate the various contexts of the participants (Kvale, 1996). This method also maintains sufficient commonality to enable comparison of data between participant accounts. Meanings of participant comments were clarified during the interviews, an approach advocated by Kvale as a "methodic ideal" since it enables initial analysis to be built into the interview situation and thus enables the final analysis to "rest on more secure ground" (1996, p. 178).

An interview outline was carefully designed to offer a range of "bridges" that could support meaning-making if necessary (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). These bridges took the form of a progressive sequence of questions employed to support participants in making meaning of cultural wellbeing, particularly if this was a concept or idea that was not familiar to them. The interview schedule is included in Appendix C. At the commencement of the interviews, participants were initially asked to provide background information about their teaching role, including their educational setting and the classes they taught, in order to establish contextual details for the interview. Participants were then asked to share their interpretation of student wellbeing, specifically in relation to their schooling experience. Next, they were asked to share their interpretation of the concept of cultural wellbeing in their classroom context,

with questions proceeding from asking about their interpretation of the concept, to asking how they supported cultural wellbeing in their practice.

Each interview lasted between 40 and 60 minutes, and was voice recorded. I transcribed the interviews from the voice recordings employing denaturalised transcription (Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005) whereby idiosyncratic or broken elements of speech (e.g., stutters, nonverbal and involuntary vocalisations) are removed to provide a more comprehensible account of the interview. Using the approach documented by Saldana (2012), salient words and passages in the transcripts were italicised and pauses, significant vocal cues and gestures were indicated in italics enclosed in parentheses to help contextualise the comments. The transcripts were emailed to all participants for checking and participants were invited to correct or provide further clarification of their transcript (Kvale, 1996).

3.3.2.2 *Memoing*

Throughout the data collection and analysis phases of the research, I recorded and wrote memos to support my reflections on the literature and the data as I engaged with the complexities of cultural wellbeing. Ongoing memoing is a vital data source which informs the theoretical sampling and the ongoing theorising process in constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). The memos were used reflexively to respond to the challenges of the study and to draw insights from the interview data for the theorising of cultural wellbeing. Numerous memos are included throughout the thesis in support of this theorising process. Memos were recorded after interviews to note particular intensities and salient points in the interviews. Memoing was also employed to pursue connections between codes in the data analysis and to pose

questions about some anomalies which informed the theoretical sampling of further participants. An example of this is demonstrated in the memo below.

Memo: 8/9/16

I find myself to be a little puzzled about what seem to be anomalies in the data. Having now interviewed a kindergarten teacher from one school and a prep teacher from another school where such different situations were described. I can't quite understand how it is that a kindergarten teacher in one school talks about cultural wellbeing in terms of the importance of young children's play and proceeds to describe the myriad ways she supports their play, while a prep teacher in another school also speaks of the importance of young children's play for cultural wellbeing and indicates that she is basically not allowed to provide play opportunities in class time. How could this be so? One thing that stands out for me in both accounts was that the kindergarten teacher said she was fortunate to be in a school in a high socio-economic area while the prep teacher pointed out that she taught in a low socio-economic area. Could that have anything to do with the anomaly in the accounts of these two educators?

As the memo above indicates, the memoing and the interviews were data sources that were closely interwoven with the theoretical sampling, data collection and analysis phases of the study. The memos helped to surface commonalities, anomalies and silences in the data which could be interrogated through the data analysis and informed the selection of further participants. The memo above for example, led to the selection of Rick, another teacher who worked in a low socio-economic suburb, in order to develop further insights about how socio-economic status influenced educators' approaches to supporting cultural wellbeing.

3.3.3 Constant Comparative Analysis

"Constant comparative analysis" is a grounded theorising method which involves analysis through comparison conducted at each level of analysis (Charmaz,

2014). Thus, in the beginning phases of data collection, constant comparative analysis involves comparing incidents in the interview data within a single interview. Then as further interviews are conducted, comparisons are made between statements and incidents within the different interviews. As the analysis progresses, constant comparative analysis shifts to comparison of codes with codes and categories with categories. By iteratively comparing and re-evaluating new and existing coded data, I was able to identify thematic categories into which the data could be sorted. These categories became the bases for theorising cultural wellbeing.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the methodology for the study and outlined the research methods that were employed in the study. It details the ways in which the different methods and forms of analysis involved in constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis were combined in response to the needs of the study. This chapter introduced the study participants and detailed the methods of data collection which included interviews with educators and researcher's memos. I introduced the methods of data analysis employed in the study including constant comparative analysis and situational analysis, and in the next chapter I detail the processes of data analysis undertaken during this study.

Chapter 4

Data analysis

In this chapter I present the data analysis for this study of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities. The analysis approach was guided by the research questions and the methodology and methods of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) outlined in the previous chapter.

Interviews and memos provided a rich array of perspectives of cultural wellbeing, requiring a number of methods to complete a comprehensive analysis. Table 4.1 summarises my progression through the data analysis and the methods employed to address each research question. Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) was fundamental to the entire research process, especially with regards to the data collection and data analysis for research question 1: "What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?" In a combination of methodologies uncommon to research on schooling in Australia, I paired situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) with constructivist grounded theory to analyse my second research question "How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?" Situational analysis was introduced for its capacity to contextualise significant issues raised by the participants, and as a result, multiple influences on educators'

perceptions of cultural wellbeing were discovered. This led me to develop a typology of cultural wellbeing to both help identify these influences and to assist in analysing their effect on classroom communities.

Table 4.1 Forms of analysis for each research question

<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Data Analysis</i>
<i>1. What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?</i>	Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014)	Grounded coding using CGT; Sorting and grouping of codes into categories. Constant Comparative Analysis.
<i>2. How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities??</i>	Situational analysis methods (Clarke, 2005)	Messy situational map; ordered situational map; Social worlds analysis map. Discourse Analysis.
<i>3. What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like? (This research question emerged during the study).</i>	Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014)	Constant Comparative Analysis

4.1 Research question 1: What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?

4.1.1 Constructivist grounded theory analysis

I selected constructivist grounded theory as a methodological approach for generating data for this study and drew upon the analytical procedures described by Charmaz (2014). The analysis of research question 1 was the initial process of analysis for the study and the coding undertaken for this question informed the

analysis of research questions 2 and 3. The workflow for the analysis of this first research question is represented in

Figure 4.1. This workflow represents my analysis of participant interview data.

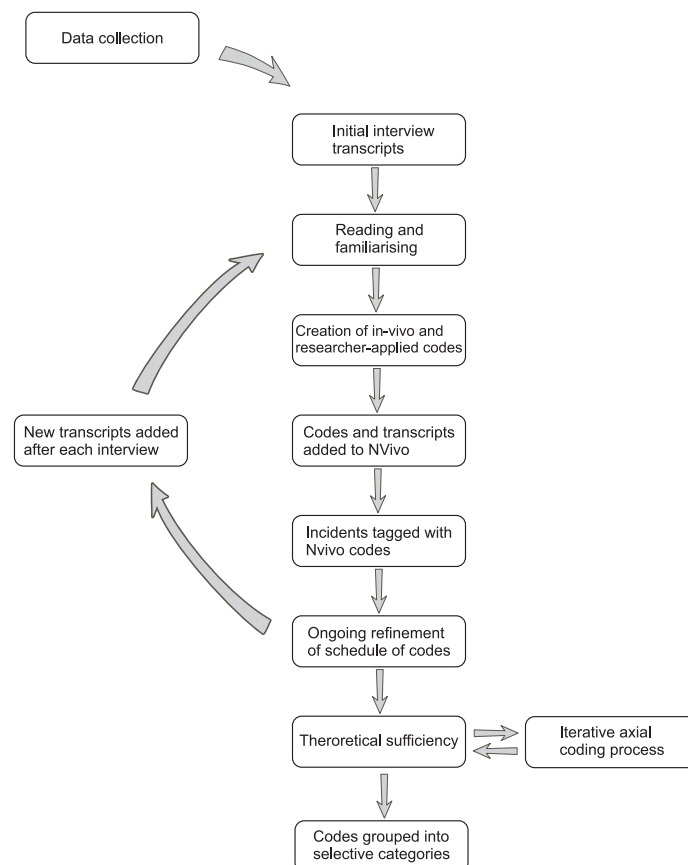


Figure 4.1 - Research question 1 data analysis workflow

The goal of the analysis of research question 1 was to theorise a schedule of categories representing the significant themes and relationships present in the interview data. I began this by creating a set of labels, or “codes”, that were attached to appropriate passages in each transcript. This is described in detail below.

4.1.2 Coding the data

In constructivist grounded theory, the analysis commences from the very first interview, and emerging concepts and ideas are then explored in subsequent interviews. In this way, the theorising becomes a process guided by both literature and data, and which responds to emergences as they surface in the interviews and in the analysis that follows. Identifying and capturing those emergences is fundamental to the data analysis process and this commenced with thoroughly familiarising myself with each interview transcript and identifying incidents of significance.

The next phase involved creating codes and assigning them to snippets of interview data. This was facilitated by the use of NVivo™ qualitative data management software. The individual codes that I created can be represented by two types:

- *researcher-applied codes* were codes I created and titled to reflect the characteristics represented by the code. For example, the code “Outdoor education” was applied to snippets of transcript that referred to educators engaging students in learning outside the classroom and in nature.
- *in-vivo codes* are the same as researcher applied codes, except a direct quote from the transcript is used for the code. For example, one educator described their experience of trying to manage their teaching workload as “running on the rev limiter” and I used that expression as a code to be applied to similar passages from educators about struggling under heavy workloads or other demanding situations.

Charmaz (2014) advocates employing in-vivo codes because of the

value they bring to analysis by giving representation in the data to the participant's voice, effectively grounding the analysis in the participants' experiences.

As I added and coded more transcripts in NVivo, I continually refined these codes by adding new codes for new emergences from the data, and by culling or merging any codes that proved to be of insufficient value. Where appropriate, "parent codes" were created to aggregate collections of codes with similar characteristics.

My analysis of the initial interviews revealed there was considerable uncertainty about the concept of cultural wellbeing amongst educators, and it became apparent that opportunities to explore pre-existing perceptions of cultural wellbeing would be limited. I coded transcript incidents such as "I haven't heard that term before" and "I haven't encountered this idea of cultural wellbeing really", which indicated cultural wellbeing was a nascent concept to educators. This was an early finding of the research and it meant that to explore educator's perceptions of cultural wellbeing I would have to co-construct meanings within the interview event. Despite there being initial uncertainty about the concept of cultural wellbeing for some participants, all educators interviewed were able to share their interpretations of the concept.

4.1.3 Constant Comparative Analysis

One of the values of incorporating constant comparative analysis is its capacity to identify common elements across multiple interview transcripts. Continually comparing newly acquired data with existing data surfaced significant details common to multiple interviews. For example, one participant mentioned that for some of her students "home sometimes isn't a safe space" which, in isolation, is

an interesting data point. Its significance was more fully realised when a subsequent participant told me she had students in her class from “homes where there’s domestic violence”. Finding two references to unsafe home environments during interviews about cultural wellbeing is important to the analysis, as it helped to explain educators’ emphasis on students feeling safe and comfortable in the classroom community. The practice of comparing data against data ensured the combined importance of these isolated comments did not go unrecognised.

4.1.4 Creating categories in the data

After 15 interviews had been transcribed and coded, following the procedures described above, I considered “theoretical sufficiency” had been reached once the rate of new code creation had fallen to the point that no major new insights were being generated from subsequent interviews. This signalled the next step in shifting from the empirical to the theoretical phase of data analysis, which was to identify links among the schedule of open codes and to abstract a collection of categories based on the relationships and themes I had found. Appendix E presents a sample section of constructivist grounded theory coding, to show how open, axial and selective coding (Charmaz, 2014) was undertaken with the data. In the process of axial coding, I took the substantive codes developed during the transcript analysis and conceptualised relationships between those codes. I used these relationships to generate theoretical categories for use in the presentation of findings that follows in Chapter 5.

4.2 Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

As described in Chapter 3, I began my analysis of research question 2 with a view to theorising educators' methods for supporting cultural wellbeing. My intention was to develop theoretical categories in the same manner as employed for the analysis of research question 1. The early results showed a series of inconsistencies and contradictions in educators' accounts of cultural wellbeing. Constructivist grounded theory has, as Clarke (2005) says, remnants of positivist approaches that steer the research towards a basic social process, which sat uncomfortably with my worldview which values multiple and partial perspectives. The following memo records some of my early analytical thinking as I commenced the analysis of research question 2.

Memo: 16 April 2015 Trying to locate a BSP in the data

In determining the key category/categories from my first interviews using constructivist grounded theory methodology, I look closely at the data coding to figure out what Charmaz (2014) calls the basic social processes (BSPs) in the data. I then develop my coding and categorising of the educators' perceptions, trying to keep the coding as close as possible to their perspectives, using their expressions as codes wherever it particularly captures the essence of something important.

Grounded theorists "analyse actions and processes rather than themes and structure" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 15), therefore the focus of my analysis is on actions and processes rather than the thematic content. I have identified a number of categories from the data, emerging out of the analysis and the transcript checking with my first four participants.

From my early analysis, it seems to me that there may be multiple social processes in the data. I feel as though the educators are each speaking from quite different worlds – and I've only done the four initial interviews! There will probably be even more once I start interviewing more educators, after I've coded these initial four interviews for

discussion with my supervisors. How will I possibly figure out a BSP that accommodates all of the complexity that is coming through in this early analysis?

The above memo shows that in the earlier phases of analysis I intended to work towards locating a basic social process in the data. A later memo reveals how I sought out alternative options for developing the analysis through employing Clarke's (2005) situational analysis approaches.

Memo: 21 July 2015 Evolving the analysis

I have decided to introduce the mapping techniques of situational analysis into the analysis rather than continuing to work towards identifying a BSP in the data. I feel as though identifying a BSP is likely to create boundaries in the analysis in ways I want to avoid. I want the theorising work to remain close to educators' multiple and diverse experiences rather than trying to reduce or simplify their perspectives to a BSP. Through the mapping techniques of situational analysis, I can see possibilities for grounding theory while also valuing and representing the differences amongst participants' perceptions.

In response to the growing sense that locating a basic social process did not align with the aim of the research, which was to value multiple and diverse perspectives of cultural wellbeing, I sought to extend upon constructivist grounded theory with methods which aligned with my personal values and worldview.

I selected situational analysis for its capacity to recognise the multiplicity of perspectives in the data and also because it is well established as a complementary methods package for research that employs constructivist grounded theory methodology (Clarke, 2005). I value and respect the lived experiences of the educators in this study, and I perceived situational analysis was able to keep the participants' voices present in the analysis.

My intention was to follow Clarke’s suggested situational analysis methodology with a view to completing a social worlds analysis that would make explicit the multiplicity of influences present in educators’ worlds. The workflow for this analysis is shown in Figure 4.2, the first step of which was to create one of Clarke’s “messy maps”.

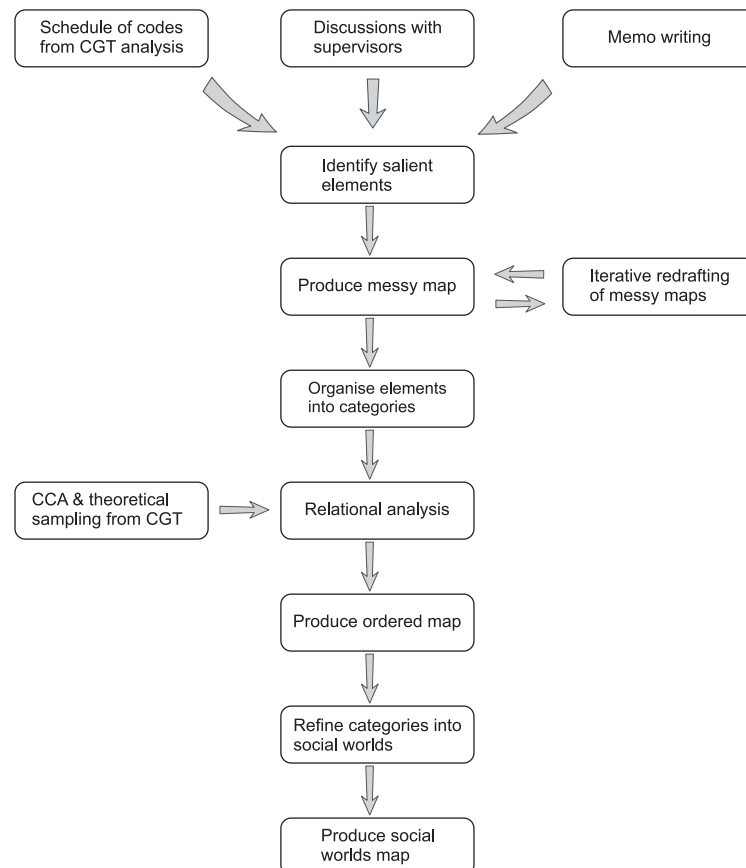


Figure 4.2 - Research question 2 data analysis workflow

4.2.1 The messy map

Clarke suggests the researcher undertake a “brainstorming” exercise to capture their impressions of the many elements present in the situation being studied. Because I had begun my analysis of research question 2 as a part of the constructivist grounded theory analysis, I had already given consideration to the many elements situated in the

classroom community. The messy map shown below in Figure 4.3 depicts those elements sourced from the earlier coding of interview transcripts, plus my reflections from memos, and from discussions with my supervisors.

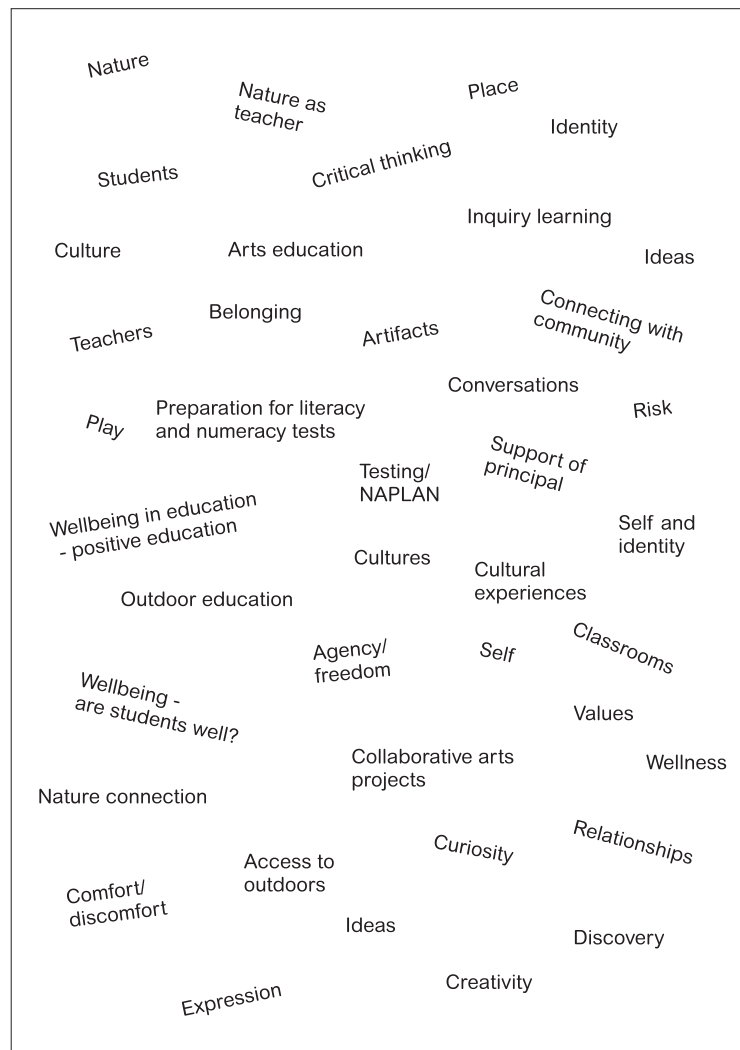


Figure 4.3 - Messy map of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing
(adapted from Clarke, 2003, p. 562).

From the earliest interviews, it became evident that educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing encompassed elements from the broader life circumstances of their students, as well as the priorities of the education system. These elements formed the structural conditions which influenced the perceptions of educators in this study, and

according to Clarke (2003) those conditions need to be continually taken into account in the analysis.

I represent the data distilled from the educator interviews on the messy map presented here, which is a depiction of the common influences and pressures informing educators' perceptions of how they supported cultural wellbeing. For example, creating conditions for students to feel comfortable and to experience a sense of belonging in the classroom community was expressed in various ways by numerous educators. Also present were notions of supporting students' creativity, providing challenge, and opportunities for students to experience a sense of agency. Over the course of the interviews, numerous educators made direct and indirect references to accountability and standardised assessment processes (particularly NAPLAN) and this raised questions for me about the influences of such accountability processes in educators' perceptions of how they support cultural wellbeing. These varied elements are depicted on the messy map.

4.2.2 The ordered map

Presenting the elements in the messy map is, in part, useful for portraying the field's complexity: the confusion and discontinuity of influences that converge, in this case, inside a classroom community. The next step, however, is to try and resolve a degree of order in the data by creating a higher level, categorised view of the situation of inquiry. The "ordered map" appears below in Figure 4.4 and has been devised by organising the elements of the messy map into categories borrowed from Clarke's "abstract situational map - ordered / working version" (2003, p. 562). This step brings order to some of the complexity that is so important to the messy map and gives a useful view of the commonalities shared among some elements. It also brings

political, social, discursive and power relations into an order that helps visualise the overall complexity of the classroom community situation.

For example, the messy map depicts elements including “culture”, “play”, “place”, “connecting with community” and “nature connection” as common to many educators’ perceptions of cultural wellbeing. However, in their interviews, some educators also described how it was hard to find the time, or get permission, to incorporate these elements into their practice. This suggested a tension existed between the educators’ preferred practice and the opportunity to employ those practices. The ordered map provided an opportunity to record and locate these incidents in the analysis and begin understanding potential sources of tension.

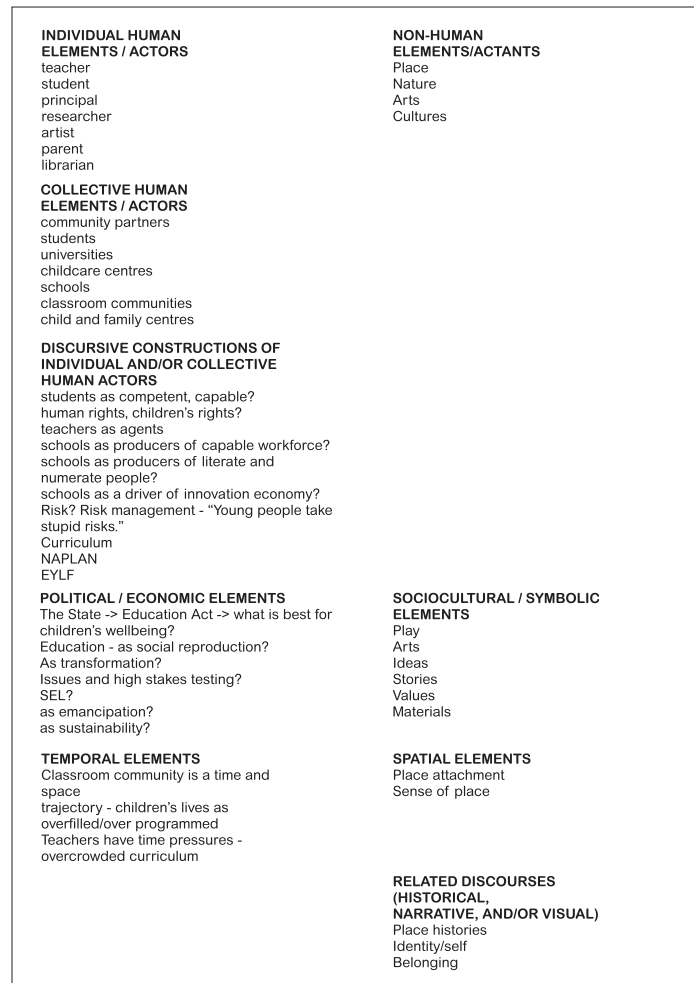


Figure 4.4 - Ordered situational map of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing
 (adapted from Clarke, 2003, p. 562).

4.2.3 The social worlds/arenas map

My aim in conducting a situational analysis was to identify internal and external influences on classroom communities and how those influences compete for primacy in the space. The final stage of this analysis was to represent the data using Clarke's social worlds/arenas map because this provides a visual indication of the source and relational qualities of those influences. The "social worlds/arenas map" in Figure 4.5 shows the social worlds that cluster within a classroom community.

Each world represents a demand on the teaching space - student needs, curriculum content, interactions with parents and administrators, assessment and reporting, compliance and others. From the perspective of the educator, these demands exist in competition with each other, becoming potential sources of conflict in the educators' world. The social worlds don't necessarily conflict directly with each other, although in some cases they might, but they represent competing demands on finite educator resources, and some social worlds may demand outcomes that conflict with the outcomes of others.

By example from the diagram (Figure 4.5), timetabling is a factor in classroom communities that demands adherence to regimented daily and weekly schedules. Learning outcomes, in the meantime, may be better served by longer or shorter lessons and more flexibility than the timetable allows. The National Assessment Program (i.e. NAPLAN) is a continual presence in classroom communities that requires a specific body of knowledge be assessed for all students. The diverse social worlds of individual students, however, will variously equip each student to engage with the specific content assessed by NAPLAN. Separately, these worlds may not be a source of conflict, but when they converge in the classroom community the educator has no option but to engage with the demands of each.

When multiple social worlds place simultaneous demands, on educators for example, their demands compete in a "social arena" in which they may impose constraints, create opportunities, consume resource or any variant or combination of these and other consequences. The social worlds analysis represented below depicts social worlds relevant to classroom communities, partially represents the relationships between them, and suggests their relative influence upon educators' "arena of

practice”. The discussion in chapters 6 and 8 further address the tensions in the field of schooling that arise from these competing social worlds.

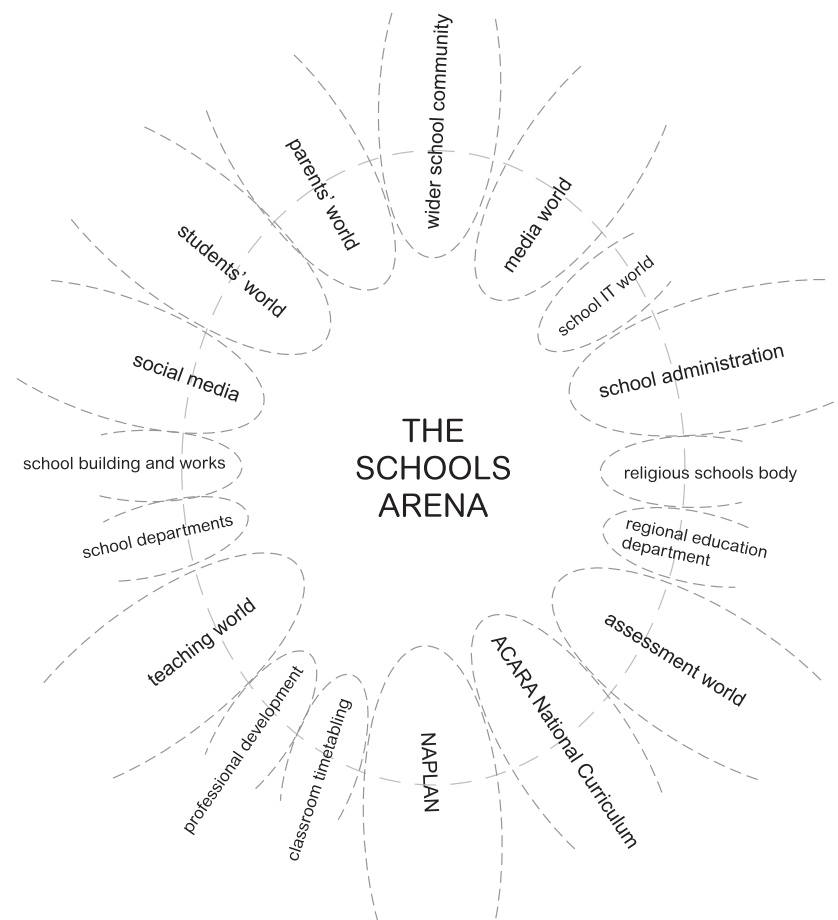


Figure 4.5 - Social worlds/arenas map

(adapted from Clarke, 2005, p. 118)

4.3 Research question 3: What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?

Memo: 2 November 2017 The complexity of cultural wellbeing continues to emerge

This was an emergent project - as new complexities emerged, so too did the idea to add a third research question, to help readers engage with the complexity without being overwhelmed by it. Perhaps this idea was also to help me not become overwhelmed by the complexity of educators' varied perspectives of cultural wellbeing. Given the scarcity of

background research in cultural wellbeing in the field of schooling, I am working with a concept of emergence which aligns with the processes of discovery in grounded theory. In *Pedagogy for a Liquid Time*, Green and Gary say “rather than the acceptance of established schema or the building of a replacement schema” there may indeed be a need “for continual schema building as a prerequisite capacity for living in a state of perpetual emergence” (Green & Gary, 2016, pp. 48–49). This resonates with the idea that emergence carries traces of learnings of the past into the learning in and for uncertain futures of constant adaptation. I envision the concept of cultural wellbeing as a useful concept for the ‘continual schema building’ in the field of education, which Osberg describes as a generative “space of emergence” (Osberg, 2005, p. 82). I anticipate cultural wellbeing is a concept that can be put to work *by and for* people living in ‘the state of perpetual emergence’ that Green and Gary describe.

An aim of this research was to identify shared understandings of cultural wellbeing without arriving at a singular definition of the term or privileging any particular interpretation of cultural wellbeing. A third research question emerged as the complexity of the findings began to be revealed. This question: “What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?” was a provocation intended to make the findings of the study more accessible.

The typology of cultural wellbeing, which is presented in Chapter 7, was produced in iterative stages. I considered an important starting point was to gain an understanding of the concepts of culture employed by the interview participants. Therefore, following the coding of data, I initially produced a typology of culture from the analysis. A typology of culture is useful in distinguishing multiple and fluid interpretations of culture (Boele van Hensbroek, 2010; Geertz, 1973; Kuttner, 2015). In Appendix F I include the typology of culture, produced from an analysis of educators’ interpretations of culture evident in the meanings they made of cultural wellbeing. I connected the three culture “Types” with cultural theories (Hall, 1997b;

Honneth, 1996; Kuttner, 2015) to reduce ambiguity and enhance the capacity to discern between different meanings of culture.

The typology of culture developed through the thesis into a proposed typology of cultural wellbeing. Producing the typology of cultural wellbeing provided a useful support for the presentation of the findings, particularly since the term “culture” has many meanings, and according to Lipka (1990), words are understood differently in the context of other words. For example, the term “cultural” can take on a different meaning or meanings when combined with the term “wellbeing”.

The typology illustrates that cultural wellbeing can be expressed in fluid and partial representations. This allows cultural wellbeing to “be” many things and creates a vehicle for researchers and others to render their own nuanced interpretations of cultural wellbeing or to apply alternative meanings of culture to their analysis.

4.4 Inter-coder reliability

Drawing upon principles of the methodology for establishing inter-coder reliability outlined by Campbell, Quincy, Osserman and Pedersen (2013), at each stage of analysis I drew upon the varied expertise of members of the supervision team to engage in inter-coder reliability checks. For example, following the coding of interview transcripts, selected transcripts were separately coded by a supervisor to inform the development of initial codes. While these codes were not intended to be identical, the meaning of the codes needed to reflect what was occurring in the interview. Thus codes, and the assignment of those codes, were discussed to facilitate consistency in the analysis.

In producing the typology of cultural wellbeing, samples of interview data that had been coded by me were independently coded by a supervisor in order to assess inter-coder reliability. An 80% level of agreement was obtained from the first round of analysis. Following discussion about differences in coding, a second round of coding was undertaken with a supervisor, using different samples of data, and 100% agreement was obtained on the second round. I present this description of the inter-coder reliability checks as an indicator of the transparency of the analysis process, however I do not make claims of the trustworthiness or generalisability of the typology on the basis of the inter-coder reliability checks. The methods of assessing inter-coder reliability were supported through ongoing discussions of the analysis with the entire supervision team during monthly supervision meetings.

4.5 Clarifying the role of the literature

In most research approaches, a literature review is conducted prior to the collection of data. However, in this research, the literature review was conducted in two phases. The practice of conducting a literature review in two phases is usual with grounded theory studies, according to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008). They indicate that initial literature review work is conducted to place the study in context and to surface former studies that have been undertaken in the field already. Therefore, a preliminary review of literature relating to culture and wellbeing and intersections between the two areas was conducted at the outset of this study to establish a warrant for conducting the research and obtain ethics approval. This aligns with constructivist grounded theory methodology and informed the development of the research questions and research design.

A second review of literature was conducted following data analysis, once the substantive categories had been identified in the data. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), the major literature review work is conducted during concept development to support the theorising process. The later literature review provides the opportunity to compare the results of the analysis with other scholars' evidence and ideas, to show how the theorising "extends, transcends, or challenges dominant ideas in [the] field" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 305). The constructivist grounded theory analysis and situational analysis revealed differences in educators' perspectives which led to examining the findings with reference to social and cultural theories including Bourdieu's theory of social practice (1984) and Hall's (1997) theories of representation. I have not presented a second literature review "section", rather the literature used in support of the discussion chapters is introduced and embedded within the discussion itself.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter details the multiple phases of data analysis which proceeded from initial analysis of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing to more critical analysis of the social and cultural locations underpinning the process of making meaning of cultural wellbeing. Working with a concept as fluid and complex as cultural wellbeing required the deployment of a range of analytic tools which employed both constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis methodologies. The production of a typology of culture during the data analysis became a useful aid to provide some clarity surrounding educators' interpretations of culture. This typology provided the foundations for a typology of cultural wellbeing which is explained in Chapter 7.

Chapter 5

Findings

This chapter addresses the first two research questions and presents the key findings from interviews conducted with educators in schools:

Research question 1:

What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?

Research question 2:

How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

Research question 3 is addressed separately in Chapter 7.

5.1 Research question 1: What perceptions do educators have of cultural wellbeing?

Educators were tentative about their perceptions of cultural wellbeing, and when asked what the term meant to them in the context of their classroom community several participants indicated that it was a new concept for them. Secondary school history teacher Ryan, for example, said the concept of cultural wellbeing was “something I’ve not encountered before”. This was echoed by Beth, head of English

in a secondary school, who commented “I haven’t encountered this idea of cultural wellbeing really”. Despite such tentative initial responses, educators proceeded to articulate their understandings of how culture and cultural aspects influenced wellbeing and they constructed meanings of cultural wellbeing through the interview process.

Educators interpretations of cultural wellbeing were situated in their classroom contexts and had an affective quality which suggested cultural wellbeing encompasses both a sense of comfort and of embracing the discomfort of the challenge of learning. Educators further perceived cultural wellbeing involves connections to people, places and culture.

As the findings presented in this chapter reveal, there were multiple interpretations of culture in the meanings educators made of cultural wellbeing. Some referred to cultural diversity and the acceptance of cultural diversity. For example, primary teacher Natalie spoke of the importance of embracing the cultural diversity of the school community in her interpretation of cultural wellbeing, commenting:

We are a global world and we will always be surrounded by other cultures and being different. We should make it an advantage and not an issue anymore, being different and diverse. We like to see this diversity in nature, why don’t we like to see it in us humans? (Natalie)

Some educators referred to the school or classroom culture, while others made reference to cultural pursuits such as arts and cultural activities in the meanings they made of cultural wellbeing. The three prevalent interpretations of culture are summarised in *the typology of culture* (presented in Appendix F).

Cultural wellbeing was described as having a beneficial orientation that involved feelings of comfort, healthy connections, and a sense of belonging which will be explored in Section 5.1.2.

5.1.1 Interpretations of cultural wellbeing are situated in local contexts

Educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing revealed that this was not a generic concept but one that was interpreted in situated contexts. All educators made meaning of the term as they related it to their classroom community and the students who formed the community. This was evident in educators' initial responses to the question "what does the term cultural wellbeing mean to you" and I illustrate this with reference to the initial responses of Rick and Lauren.

Primary school teacher Rick taught in a low-SES government school and his formulation of cultural wellbeing was notable in that he began by negating the concept commenting, "Cultural wellbeing [pause]... that is a broad thing as it is. I guess for me, like, I don't see it as cultural wellbeing I guess, if that makes sense." He proceeded to clarify, "I guess I just – I try to understand the culture that they are in." Through this clarification Rick revealed that for him cultural wellbeing was not about the meaning that broader society might apply to the term. Rather than adopting some type of "master narrative" (Morrison, 1992) interpretation of a term like cultural wellbeing, Rick made it meaningful to his context, relating it to the everyday culture of his students. As the findings later in this chapter reveal, Rick identified the lives of his students as somewhat socially isolated and he conveyed a respect and valuing of their different contexts.

Prep teacher Lauren who also taught in a low-SES government school articulated complex and coherent ideas of cultural wellbeing as her initial comments reveal:

I guess for me, it [cultural wellbeing] probably means it's ensuring the wellbeing of all students in my classroom, but ensuring that children and their families, probably through an understanding of their culture, are being well supported in my classroom and in my school environment. So, it's understanding their language, their customs, behaviours, beliefs, their cultural backgrounds and how that contributes to their emotional and mental wellbeing. (Lauren)

Similar to Rick, Lauren interpreted cultural wellbeing in relation to the students in her class. Lauren interpreted the cultural aspect of wellbeing as connected with cultural identities in terms of the ethnic diversity of her classroom community. Asked whether the idea of cultural wellbeing was something she had thought about before or whether these ideas had just been formulated as she spoke, Lauren was quick to articulate the considerations that had informed her initial response:

No, it's definitely something that I've thought about, and it has to be that way, because of the nature of my setting. I work in a school that obviously is multiculturally diverse, and it's been that way for a long time, so it's in my best interest as a prep teacher, and definitely as a prep teacher because that's the entry point for these children and families into our school, to do the best I can to promote mutual respect between the school and families. So, doing everything that I possibly

can to support cultural wellbeing has always been really important, particularly at the school I'm in at the moment. (Lauren)

Lauren's reference to cultural wellbeing having particular salience in her current school appeared significant. During the interview exchange which followed, Lauren explained how this was influential:

Sherridan: Do you say "particularly at this school" as in contrast to other schools where you've worked?

Lauren: Definitely. I've worked at other schools where the make-up of my class was largely of people just like me, so English-speaking Australian children. That's not necessarily the case in my classes now, well it's definitely not the case. So, I believe that my class is a richer place if I can understand everybody's cultural diversity, and you know, their cultural background.

Working with a diverse cohort of students is part of Lauren's daily teaching context. Here she alluded to the difference she perceived between her (white) Australian cultural identity and the cultural diversity of her class. Lauren indicated how for her, cultural wellbeing involved being aware of the differences between herself and her students and working to understand her students, including their cultural identities. She explained how this informed the meaning she made of cultural wellbeing, which in her view involved seeking to understand her students in their fuller contexts, including their family backgrounds and their cultural backgrounds.

These excerpts illustrate the emphasis educators placed on their teaching contexts which were part of the situation in which they made meanings of cultural wellbeing.

5.1.2 Cultural wellbeing has an affective quality

Common across all of the interviews was the perception that cultural wellbeing has an *affective quality* or in other words, that a classroom community has an atmosphere or climate that is a felt or sensed experience. There were commonalities in the affective qualities educators associated with cultural wellbeing.

Affective characteristics are part of the lens through which students experience schooling and are influenced by the activities and events which occur in the classroom community (Wetherall, 2012). Many educators perceived that cultural wellbeing involved students *feeling comfortable* and *a sense of belonging* in classroom communities. As Table 5.1 shows, seven educators made reference to students *feeling comfortable*, and educators similarly described cultural wellbeing as students *feeling a sense of belonging* (7 out of 15). I offer narrative accounts from Ryan, Rick and Lauren to illustrate the variability of perspectives, before noting some other themes about the affective qualities that educators perceived to be connected with cultural wellbeing.

Table 5.1 Educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing

Educators	Belonging	Comfort	Connection
Jacky	✓		✓
Valerie	✓		
Kathryn			✓
Mary			
Belinda	✓	✓	✓
Kirsty	✓		✓
Dan	✓	✓	✓
Ryan	✓	✓	
Beth	✓	✓	✓
Chelsea			✓
Rick		✓	✓
Natalie		✓	
Stella			✓
Charles			✓
Lauren		✓	
No. of responses	7	7	10

Secondary school history teacher Ryan interpreted cultural wellbeing as “someone who feels they have an understanding of what culture they belong to and is happy and comfortable... within that culture and comfortable with the way their culture is accepted or acknowledged by the school and community at large.” In this interpretation it appeared that Ryan located cultural wellbeing within the individual (“someone”), and as having an affective quality (“someone who feels...”). Ryan appeared to interpret culture through a lens of ethnicity or race, notable in his further clarification, “Wellbeing presumably has to have something to do with comfort and contentedness within one’s identified culture or set of cultures.” Ryan’s interpretation

of cultural wellbeing appears to focus on the literal lexical structure of the words (Lipka, 1990), taking its formation to mean a person's wellbeing in relation to their cultural identity and how that cultural identity is accepted.

Primary school teacher Rick also emphasised the importance of students feeling comfortable at school and gave particular prioritisation to students' sense of safety. "[Students] need to feel safe at school and if they're not safe, if they're not comfortable, if they're not mentally stable to learn, they're not going to learn anyway." Rick's reference to the importance of students feeling safe and "mentally stable" at school suggested that he connected cultural wellbeing with psychological wellbeing or mental health. The school in which Rick taught has a high incidence of trauma backgrounds amongst its student population, which may explain Rick's emphasis on feelings of psychological safety. This makes some further sense of the earlier comment from Rick that he does not see cultural wellbeing as "a broad thing", but that he sees his work as connecting with students and their cultures.

While comfort was a central idea in many educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing, Lauren noted that this might be experienced differently by different students. Asked what cultural wellbeing would look like in her classroom, Lauren explained: "You would see happy engaged children, you would see me questioning children in a way, or conversing with children *in a way that is comfortable for them and it's not the same for all children*" (emphasis added). Lauren's comments begin to reveal the nuances of cultural wellbeing in a classroom community, conveying the idea that in addition to being a situated and contextual concept, cultural wellbeing may be experienced differently by different students.

The affective quality of feeling comfortable at school extended beyond students. Rick and Belinda both spoke of cultural wellbeing as involving parents and carers feeling comfortable at school. Belinda explained, “One principal said to me, the number of parents who are at the school and engaging in school is a key determinant of students’ performance... If you can get them [parents]... feeling comfortable to be there, that’s huge”. The idea of parents’ sense of comfort with school resonated with Rick’s comments: “if parents don’t value the school then are the kids going to do it?... We want [students] to value school and we want them to feel safe but we need to make the parents feel safe as well”. One of the early findings to emerge from the interviews was that educators interpreted cultural wellbeing in classroom communities to mean that students and their parents and carers feel safe and comfortable at school. This safety included a sense of acceptance and belonging, and a feeling of psychological safety to be in the classroom.

While educators’ perceptions of cultural wellbeing emphasised the sense of *feeling comfortable* in the classroom community, they also described the need to push students out of their comfort zones, and to *unsettle the sense of comfort* which appeared as somewhat of a paradox in the data. In discussing cultural wellbeing, Ryan described the way he sought to unsettle students in his history class to engage them in the learning:

In history, every civilisation we have looked at has collapsed. And I challenge students why will we be any different? Every one of these civilisations at their apex thought that they were unstoppable. And so, *I really confront them with the reality* and some of them, you can see they become forlorn. But if we’re to have any chance in taking the action that we need to, we’ve got to... you don’t have to exaggerate

anything to scare them. But we've got to be open about it. Particularly at a private school you can't wrap them up in cotton wool and pretend it's all smooth sailing. (Ryan, emphasis added)

In sharing his perspectives of cultural wellbeing Ryan indicates how he sees his teaching role as one of unsettling students' easy comfort about the world and their part in history. He gives further insight into how the students experience the class, commenting "they will debate each other and I'll argue, and I'll kind of let it go because you can tell *they're so conflicted and spun out* by it all. And you know, they'll remember this."

The conflict Ryan refers to appears to be a reference to the inner conflict of learning, which aligns with theories of learning [such as Piaget's (1985) theory of cognitive disequilibrium], however the type of unsettling Ryan describes sits in contrast to educators' ideas of cultural wellbeing involving a sense of comfort and safety. The discomfort and dissonance of learning was also part of Beth's depiction of engaging students in her secondary school English classes as she explained: "there's *a lot of provocation* in the work I do to do with cultural identity and assumptions, there's a lot of critical thinking and questioning and challenging and *making uncomfortable*."

Beth brought this perspective of making uncomfortable into direct relation with cultural wellbeing as she continued:

So, I then consider what cultural wellbeing might be and how doing that can be a positive, how it can be a healthy balanced thing for the individuals, and also how I can ensure that it is, making sure there is a

safety and the importance of having the respect [pause], and the [pause]
yeah, the empathy. (Beth)

Ryan and Beth's depiction of taking students into challenging areas of thinking and dialogue is reminiscent of Biesta's (2015) advocacy for emergent pedagogy in which there is a continual opening up of inquiry in a dialogical space. These educators' accounts indicate that they are fully engaged in the inquiry that occurs in their classroom community. Beth offers a sense that she remains present with the students in the challenging and uncomfortable space of critical inquiry, mediating the experience and maintaining some sense of safety. Ryan indicated that he was more inclined to "let it go" and leave conflict to be negotiated by the students, which may have implications for their sense of ontological security (Giddens, 1991) during classroom debate, particularly when students become forlorn about the prospects for the future, as Ryan suggests.

In these varied ways educators depicted cultural wellbeing possessing an affective quality that encompasses students experiencing both a sense of comfort and discomfort and feelings of belonging at school. The importance of the affective quality of experiences in school was a central focus for Greene (1995) who observed there are aspects of culture which are neither articulated nor objectively observable, but include sensed, felt, remembered, embodied and deeply held parts of human experiences. These notions appear to lie beneath the surface layer of daily routines in classroom communities, yet these experiential qualities are present in educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing.

From the educators' perspectives, cultural wellbeing first and foremost involved students feeling safe and comfortable at school, and feeling that their

wellbeing is supported in this way. These views were juxtaposed with others which presented cultural wellbeing as related to students being dislodged from that place of comfort and thrust into the inner conflict of learning to which Ryan and Beth refer. The findings suggested there are tensions within the concept of cultural wellbeing between, on the one hand, creating a sense of comfort and security, and on the other, provoking enough discomfort to generate learning in a classroom community.

5.1.3 Cultural wellbeing is related to healthy connections with people, places and cultures.

Healthy connections with people

Healthy relationships and positive interactions among students and between students and educators are common features of educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in this study. There is also an emphasis on the qualities of the relationships between students and their peers, families and communities which arts educator Kathryn described as a "connectedness to other people".

Middle school teacher Natalie perceived that cultural wellbeing centred around this relationship, which she depicted as "the triangle of the school, the parents, and in the middle is the student". She commented further, "It's very important that all the parties feel comfortable in their situation so it really can grow" (Natalie). The school, parents and students are key actors in this depiction of cultural wellbeing (although the ecosystem view also locates other external actors, including the school system and broader society). This view that cultural wellbeing is linked with the quality of the relations between people was also emphasised by Stella:

Cultural wellbeing, I think, is about participating with other people in your community... I think it's about the richness of the life and the

connections that you have within your place that you reside. So, it is those simple things of sharing experiences together with other people.

(Stella)

The school-community arts project co-produced by Stella aimed to increase connections between the school and its community by bringing parents and carers into the school grounds to work together with their children. The arts project was designed to support healthy relationships between children, families and school staff, building on the idea that schools are “embedded in multiple social contexts that interact with surrounding social, cultural, and physical environments” (Berkowitz, Moore, Astor, & Benbenishty, 2017, p. 33), which influence school culture and students’ wellbeing (Thomas et al., 2016). The influence that Stella described as important for cultural wellbeing was to do with experiences shared with other people which she perceived as contributing to positive relationships and the “richness” of life in a community.

Kindergarten teacher Chelsea echoed this view of cultural wellbeing as a richness of life, depicting cultural wellbeing as a “healthy culture of support for each other and healthy culture of respect for diversity. It’s having a culture that’s not in conflict.” This reference to conflict was not further elaborated upon by Chelsea, nevertheless, Chelsea’s perception of cultural wellbeing as relating to an absence of conflict raises a question about the possibilities for cultural wellbeing in circumstances where conflict is present. The meaning of *conflict* is unspecified by kindergarten teacher Chelsea, however from the broader context of the interview it appears she is referring to conflict in the sense of *violence**. The topic of violence was evident in the interviews with Lauren, Valerie and Kirsty who noted its presence in

* This is a different usage of conflict to that employed by high school teachers Ryan and Beth who spoke about conflict in the classroom discussions in relation to the cognitive conflict of *learning*.

the home and school lives of students and spoke of cultural wellbeing as requiring them to establish classroom communities as spaces where healthy relationships flourished. Valerie alluded to violence in students' home lives in her comment "for some children I have worked with, home sometimes isn't a safe space." Lauren detailed the conflict more directly commenting "In my school community, it's quite a low socio-economic area; these children are frequently coming from homes where there's discontent, homes where there's domestic violence." Conflict was also reported by educators as being present in school relationships. Art teacher Kirsty described the violence of bullying being "this sort of culture that is quite big in the high school". Recent research indicates that bullying is an extensive problem in Australian schools which has led to an array of bullying prevention policies and programs, but that more needs to be done to understand and address the broader social and cultural underpinnings of the problem (Herne, 2016).

Healthy relationships are important aspects of students' wellbeing (Thomas et al., 2016), and educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing offered insights into the important roles schools can serve as spaces away from violence experienced outside of school. However, their perspectives also drew attention to the violence that can occur within schools and the need for schools to support students in fostering healthy relationships.

Healthy connections with, and uses of, places

A common theme evident in the data was that educators perceived cultural wellbeing was associated with students' connections to places and especially to nature. Charles, co-producer of a school-community arts program, suggested cultural wellbeing "is about sense of place... and it's being able to take that further than sense of place. It's being able to creatively express your sense of place or to have an

exchange of sense of place with someone”. Charles and co-producer Stella designed the arts program with a strong emphasis on place, bringing together children and families in the school grounds to build billy carts for the children to play with in local streets.

Experiencing a “sense of place” was important for cultural wellbeing in Charles’ view. The notion of a sense of place reflects the tendency for people to form emotional bonds with places (Williams & Stewart, 1998) and has been described as a living ecological relationship between a person and a place (Cobb, 1977). This raises the prospect that cultural wellbeing is related to people’s everyday lived experiences in the places they inhabit. This draws attention to the qualities of school environments and places in which schooling is conducted and their potential for supporting cultural wellbeing.

Kindergarten teacher Chelsea was another educator who perceived a strong connection between place and cultural wellbeing. In her experience of working closely with young children, Chelsea perceived cultural wellbeing benefits from an active engagement amongst students and outdoor environments and explained what cultural wellbeing would look like in her class:

Children would be collaborating with each other and they would be supporting each other and communicating well. Outdoors you would see a lot more crossover of social groups, you’d see a great deal of intermingling between the children. And they would be working together, they’d be carrying big logs up the hill together, making beautiful aesthetic sorts of things together in the bush. (Chelsea)

Chelsea's comments here suggest cultural wellbeing may relate to the ways students interact with the places and the materials of schooling. Chelsea perceived the outdoors offered many natural learning resources and was a less constrained space than indoors, where student learning was limited by the materials she could make available to the students. Chelsea depicted the location where the activity of schooling takes place as consequential for cultural wellbeing in terms of the freedom it afforded children in working, socialising and collaborating together, and the materials it provided for them to work with together.

A link between experiences of the world and cultural wellbeing is evident in the perception of primary teacher Rick who taught in a regional school:

For me, cultural wellbeing would be to expand [students'] knowledge of the world that they live in, not the big world, but the world that they live in, and that is taking them to places that they don't necessarily go or showing them things that they don't necessarily get to see. (Rick)

In interpreting cultural wellbeing as related to enlarging students' worlds, Rick emphasised the importance of connecting with the worlds that students "live in" rather than the "big world". This clarification was not inconsequential. Rick teaches in a low SES regional school, in a suburb that is stigmatised for its low SES status. Rick's comments offer an example of how educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing were responsive to students' contexts. Rick further noted that he knew many of his students "don't go beyond" the local department store, indicating that he perceived many of the students in his class led very localised lives. Giving students expanded access to experiences and, importantly, locations beyond their current boundaries suggested that Rick perceived cultural wellbeing to have a spatial quality.

In this way, the concept of cultural wellbeing appears to involve activating and accessing encounters which enlarged students' worlds, both experientially and spatially.

The idea of cultural wellbeing as expanding students' worlds was shared by other educators and included encountering people in the community outside of the classroom. Kindergarten teacher Chelsea suggested cultural wellbeing involved

being aware of the bigger world than just your own so you're not just looking at your own narrow cultural experiences, but through education, through experiences, children need to come into contact with the wider world, outside the four classroom walls... It's going out and connecting with the community. (Chelsea)

Chelsea sought to expand students' awareness *beyond* their own worlds, while Rick's interpretation of cultural wellbeing emphasised the importance of *remaining connected to* the everyday world his students lived in while also expanding beyond their current localised boundaries. While the educators made these comments in response to questions of cultural wellbeing, education scholars and theorists note that such enlarged experiences of the world are also vital for learning and healthy development (Biesta, 2015; Bronfenbrenner, 1995b; Ewing, 2010; Gergen, 2009; Greene, 1995).

This finding was evident across low, average and high SES locations, however analysis across the data revealed patterns whereby educators in high SES schools described being able to access a variety of encounters beyond the school, while some educators in low SES schools described constraints which appeared to limit their

access to encounters outside the classroom. This finding is interrogated further in Chapter 6.

Present in educators' accounts of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities was the sense of school being a *human space*. This appeared through their emphasis on the need to first and foremost recognise students' humanity, their values and rights as human beings worthy of a "quality education". All educators in the study talked about cultural wellbeing in relation to the contexts of their students' lives. The human-ness and the life circumstances of the occupants of classroom communities infused educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing, which resonated with their insights into students' lives both inside and beyond the classroom.

Educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing were commonly concerned with responding to the challenges that students encounter. When reflecting on cultural wellbeing, Dan referred to the remedial qualities of outdoor spaces for helping his students deal with social pressures of contemporary life:

I think for us, from our point of view, the outdoors offers a wonderful avenue to be able to look at those topics and sort of remove the other layer of crap, if you don't mind me saying, that's associated with some of the day-to-day environments, some of the technologies, some of the peer rubbish, that they've got to deal with... we're very much aware, particularly as students get towards teenage years, that there's all these other external factors they are trying to balance and deal with. (Dan)

Here Dan connects his role as an outdoor educator to students' contexts in indicating how the school is able to provide healthy spaces for students to deal with

some of the pressures that surround them. Asked to elaborate upon some of these external pressures, Dan explained:

I guess as you get into year 9, 10, 11 and 12, some of the different social environments they might find themselves in, exposure to things like alcohol, drugs, getting your driver's license, access to money, credit cards, debts, girlfriends, sex, going through puberty and having a body that is changing on you, and all of a sudden not knowing what you're capable of in terms of your physical strength... Just things like that, on top of everything else is, all of a sudden, a bit of a mixed bag, and I think, well we know that a lot of kids struggle at that point. (Dan)

Identifying the “crap” (as he termed it) of students’ day-to-day worlds as a challenge to cultural wellbeing, Dan revealed the social milieu in which young people exist creates complex scenarios for students to negotiate and is part of students’ embodied experiences of school. This embodiment of students’ lifeworlds is part of the circumstance of the classroom community which educators incorporated into their interpretations of cultural wellbeing. Dan’s depiction of the “layer of crap” illustrated his concerns for student wellbeing in a context of ongoing change and uncertainty.

To summarise, educators perceived cultural wellbeing in classroom communities has an affective quality that involves healthy connections to people, places and cultures. This is neatly summarised in the comments of kindergarten teacher Chelsea that cultural wellbeing was “to do with the people that you live with, and the places you live and connections that unite places and people... And if you have really healthy connections you have cultural wellbeing.” In the next section I turn from considering how educators *interpret the concept* of cultural wellbeing to

present the findings of the ways that educators perceived they *support* cultural wellbeing in classroom communities.

5.2 Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

When asked to describe their perceptions of supporting cultural wellbeing, the educators in this study described enlisting pedagogies and practices that are, in many instances, intended to enhance students' capacities to navigate the conditions they encounter inside and outside of their school lives. The findings indicate that these practices are encouraged (and sometimes discouraged) by school leadership. This section engages with the perspectives of multiple educators in the study to explore how they supported cultural wellbeing. A summary of the practices and pedagogies that educators described employing to support cultural wellbeing appears in Appendix G.

5.2.1 Enabling experiences of connection

Educators perceived that they supported cultural wellbeing through creating opportunities for students to build healthy connections with people, places and cultures. This involved engaging students in interactions with others and providing students with experiences with people and community, with places and with the cultural world, and I address these in turn.

5.2.1.1 Connection with people and community

All educators emphasised the importance of positive and healthy relationships with peers, families, and the broader community for cultural wellbeing, and some educators described how they fostered opportunities to bring students together with other people. Arts educators Valerie and Kathryn for example brought students together for weekly arts workshops in the school where the focus was on sitting and working together as a group around a large table. Valerie described how this practice provided an environment for students to build trusting connections within the group, commenting “They share within the group. Whereas when you work by yourself you’ve got no one to talk through stuff. Here you have a group of people and as they talked through their process they opened up a lot more”.

Some educators described supporting cultural wellbeing through projects that brought families and community members into schools to participate in school-based projects and initiatives designed to strengthen relationships between students, families and the school. Belinda explained how a gardening activity she arranged as a school community project generated wide participation:

We had to spread an enormous amount of pine bark on one of our gardens and we had a big barbecue day, and strangely we had about 14 dads turn up. The school was very surprised, because they don’t usually see dads come into the school at all but we had their wheelbarrows lined up, a very simple exercise of shovelling pine bark into the wheelbarrow then go and tip it, and they loved it. (Belinda)

This is an example of how educators described supporting cultural wellbeing by creating opportunities for parents to connect with their children’s schooling. The

increasing interaction between school students, families and the school which develop through such projects can positively influence the school culture (Gergen, 2009).

Activating these beneficial interactions was integral to Belinda's approach to supporting cultural wellbeing and was a key focus of the gardening project Belinda managed. Arts producer Charles likewise spoke of providing opportunities for positive interactions in family relationships within schools through the billy-cart project:

What are we doing today? Oh, that's right, we're creating a happy childhood memory... Keep it simple. And then everyone kind of forgets what is going on, and we turn around and everyone's painting, making a cart, and they're in the here and now and that's the thing.

(Charles)

Other educators described locating certain classes, experiences or celebrations in particular places outside the classroom, including a library, a community centre, and studio spaces. Learning outside the classroom provided opportunities for family and communities to engage in projects and initiatives designed to foster connections which support cultural wellbeing. Charles described such initiatives as creating "a positive social ecology [where] we create this space, this place, where it's within the school [grounds] but it's just a place that is very welcoming, non-threatening. It's a non-judgemental space"* . In this way educators described supporting cultural wellbeing through place-based initiatives that made the boundaries between students,

* The billy cart program took place each Wednesday morning in the school car park and in this way was "within the school" as Charles states, yet it was also outside of the school buildings, in an open space. This space was chosen as a non-threatening space for parents and carers who may have disengaged from the school.

families and the community more permeable, enabling students' participation in positive interactions and encounters with others.

Educators also emphasised initiatives which involved students leaving the confines of the school premises to interact with members of the community outside of the school. Kindergarten teacher Chelsea, for example, connected students with their community through excursions into the local area surrounding the school:

We go for a walk down in [suburb name] and visit the cafés, restaurants and businesses owned by people from many different countries and they talk to the children about where all their cultural backgrounds are. After our excursion, we look at the world map, and then we write them thank you letters and we look at the different languages. (Chelsea)

Supporting cultural wellbeing involved interweaving curriculum content learning with community connections for students, according to Chelsea. She sought to build curriculum learning opportunities around interactions with local community through the writing of letters and thank you notes to new acquaintances, and through the class conducting further research on the countries and languages that students had encountered during their meetings with local restaurant owners.

These perspectives shared by educators bring attention to their support for connections between people as integral to cultural wellbeing, and they also speak of place connections. "Places are profoundly pedagogical" notes Gruenwald (2003, p. 621) who contends that places have the "power to shape experiential, cultural, ideological, political, and ecological orientations toward 'being-in-the-world'" (p. 642). In addition to employing place-based approaches to supporting cultural

wellbeing in school grounds, educators described connecting students with places with high natural qualities.

5.2.1.2 Forming connections with nature and the environment

Connecting children with nature has been found to have important benefits for physical health and emotional wellbeing (Louv, 2005; Phenice & Griffore, 2004) and the educators in this study perceived that connections to nature were also important for cultural wellbeing. Providing enriching experiences in outdoor environments was part of kindergarten teacher Chelsea's pedagogical approach. In addition to using a vegetable patch outside her classroom as a learning space, Chelsea based her nature kindergarten program in a bush reserve near the school and she emphasised the importance of these environmental spaces for cultural wellbeing. In Chelsea's view "the really rich experiential learning" occurred in the outdoors. She explained further:

That's to do with when the children are engaged body and soul with what they're doing. They are leading the learning, and they're following their interests and their curiosity. So, when they're learning experientially, it's not paper learning, it's not photocopied sheets, it's not hearing it second hand. They're setting the agenda, they're finding the resources, they're working out who they're going to play with and they're engaged – their bodies are there, their minds are there, and their emotions are there and you can see that there is a really deep investigation happening. (Chelsea)

The view that Chelsea depicted is of active and curious children who are competent and powerful in their outdoor world. The scene described here is one of play, but also of children as engaging in experiential learning in the outdoors.

Outdoor educator Dan, likewise perceived that cultural wellbeing involved engaging students in outdoor environments to explore their developing sense of self and their roles in the world. Dan viewed his role as an outdoor educator as giving students “an opportunity to reconnect” with the natural world by engaging them in natural environments:

Ultimately the aim of whatever it is you’re doing is for the students to be immersed in that environment for a period of time where they have no choice but to engage with it. To develop... a sense of appreciation, a sense of understanding, it could be a sense of connectedness to it, in order to understand their place in it. And I don’t just mean just the environment but I guess I’m also talking philosophically here about their place in the bigger picture as well. (Dan)

Dan perceived immersing students in “real-world” natural environments presents opportunities to introduce students to larger questions about their relatedness to the world. Phenice and Griffore (2004) contend this can lead to stronger bonding with a sense of self as students consider who they are in relation to the natural world. Dan’s perspective resonates with that of Chelsea, that cultural wellbeing involves expanding students’ experiences of the world, connections to the world, and consciousness of their part in the world.

There is inherent value in being outdoors according to the approach employed by Dan with this K-12 program which aimed to engage students of all ages in the outdoors. Dan spoke of engaging students through “fun activities”, meeting students “where they are” in terms of their engagement in the outdoors. In this view, cultural

wellbeing is perceived as reconnecting with natural environments through a personalised program of outdoor activities.

In terms of opportunities for engagement in learning outside the classroom, vegetable gardens were specifically mentioned by educators Belinda and Chelsea as spaces which were beneficial, both in terms of cultural wellbeing and for learning. Chelsea for example described teaching maths concepts to her kindergarten students using the vegetable garden:

Gardening has important mathematical applications... so the requirements of nature will tell the kids what to do... there's the sensory engagement too, they're getting the sounds of the outdoors and the smell of the earth, the more the senses are engaged the more the synapses are synapsing. And there is a lot more sharing once you build up that culture in your classroom. (Chelsea)

Chelsea attributes multiple wellbeing benefits to engaging students in the garden. These include the experiential learning, the sensory stimulation and the beneficial interactions between students produced through the activities in the garden. This leads to an enhanced classroom culture in Chelsea's view.

Belinda, a project manager for kitchen garden programs across numerous schools, similarly described the kitchen garden as an environmental space that supported cultural wellbeing:

The garden sits there, it is a vehicle, but it has to be activated. You can't just walk out and look at it and say you get wellbeing from it... kids are very active engagers with their environment. What we try to

provide is a theatre set to enable people to provide a process for wellbeing... [In the garden] you can see a curiosity, [students] are not passively sitting there,...they're actively engaged in the process.

(Belinda)

The vegetable garden can be viewed as a resource, or as Belinda described it, an “engagement tool” where “people can come and make their mark, build a sign... do something positive in their school garden where they feel they make a difference”. She described the kitchen garden as a stimulus for active engagement and curiosity in the processes of learning science, art and sustainability. It also served as an enriched environmental space for activating interactions where all participants, students, educators and community members alike can do something positive, using their various background knowledges. The school kitchen garden phenomenon is a trend that has gathered strong momentum in Australia (and internationally) (Block et al., 2012; Gibbs et al., 2013; Ozer, 2007) and Belinda described the school garden as a site that offers potential for positively supporting cultural wellbeing.

In addition to the importance of engaging students in the outdoors to develop their understandings of nature and ecosystems, educators perceived the value of students simply “spending time” in the outdoors to connect, or as “an opportunity to *reconnect*” with environments, as Dan commented. Aboriginal educator Valerie also highlighted the importance of students being in the outdoors, and problematised the limitations of classroom life: “How do you engage with the environment if you are removed from it?” Valerie perceived that students spend too much time in the classroom and not enough time outside in nature. Valerie described how she had taken a class of students on Country in a previous course she ran and considered this was important for cultural wellbeing:

because they were not stuck in a classroom and focusing on this and that (points to my computer and her phone) they were more engaged with the outside world. It was challenging at times too because we went out in all types of weather, rain, hail and shine. I think that's one of the things about learning now is it's mainly focused on the inside, it's not out in the big world. It's all just learning inside a screen and the students become very alienated from the natural world. (Valerie)

Valerie's view of a "big world" outside the classroom resonated with the views of other educators including Dan, Belinda and Chelsea, that engaging students with the experiences of the natural world was important for cultural wellbeing. Valerie conveyed a concern that instead of engaging with the world through holistic learning in diverse environments, contemporary ways of schooling are alienating students from the natural world and confining them to spending their school lives in the "small worlds" of the classroom and the even smaller screen worlds of computers and phones. National parks, bushland reserves, and vegetable gardens were some of the places educators perceived as enabling environments for cultural wellbeing. The discussion in Chapter 6 will, however, describe the unequal distribution of access to these environmental spaces.

5.2.1.3 Connecting with cultural worlds

Educators supported cultural wellbeing through generating opportunities for students to explore their sense of self and identities in relating to cultural worlds beyond the classroom community. Giving students access to cultural encounters was important for supporting cultural wellbeing for some educators, where the cultural encounters referred to mainly involved forms of art, contemporary leisure pursuits

and cultural expression. Primary teacher Rick explained, that he supported cultural wellbeing by trying to offer students “experiences that they enjoy that they don’t get to touch upon at all through [their] home life. So, for me, cultural wellbeing would be to expand their knowledge of the world that they live in.” Rick perceived that his students had limited access to experiences of the world beyond their local suburb and made it a priority to provide such opportunities through their schooling. He supported cultural wellbeing by increasing students’ exposure to the wider world and different experiences of the world.

Secondary school English teacher Beth also sought to enrich learning for students through expanding their cultural worlds and providing encounters with literature was one of the ways she viewed her classroom practice as supporting cultural wellbeing. “A lot of what I’m interested in is connecting the learning, having the learning at the centre of the student and the real world, and I guess literature and the texts that we study” commented Beth.

The idea of cultural wellbeing conveyed by Rick and Beth is of learning as a link between students and the so-called “real world”. In this view, the school serves as *a bridge connecting* students with the world. For this bridging of learning, educators placed emphasis on the pedagogies that they employed for supporting cultural wellbeing, and particularly advocated experiential and participatory pedagogies. Educators described employing experiential pedagogies that stimulated curiosity and creativity for supporting cultural wellbeing, for example through inquiry learning and embodied ways of working, such as arts rich education, outdoor education and play-based learning

Prep teacher Lauren afforded insight into the ways that prep aged children experience their cultural worlds through play, and described the importance of play as a *process* for cultural wellbeing, explaining that for the four and five year old students in her class:

play is their day, play is the way they learn, play is the way they express who they are. And as an expression of who they are, their culture is everything. Play to me is the driver for how a child expresses themselves in that setting. (Lauren)

What Lauren emphasises here is the intrinsic importance of the valued cultural practice of play and its central role in the life, learning and cultural wellbeing of prep children. Rogoff (2003) described play as a cultural process and practice that is innate to human beings and a driver of growth and development, and Lauren's insights reinforce the central role of play and tell of the foundational role she perceived play served in supporting cultural wellbeing in her prep class.

Arts education was another cultural process that arts educator Kathryn perceived could bring people together and suggested that both the process and the output could be generative of cultural wellbeing in her comment:

I feel like our artwork is what holds and cements all of us together because it is our culture... we've got a connection somehow and that's why I like to make artwork... it's the most fundamental thing that makes us all Australian. It makes us who we are, it joins us together.”
(Kathryn)

Here Kathryn's perception of cultural wellbeing centres on the processes and creative outputs of the arts. She describes the representation or embodiment of culture through art as having a force which connects people together. In this formulation the cultural practice of making art is more than *something we do* as humans. Kathryn suggests that this cultural practice *does something to us*. In this depiction, the relational orientation to practice inherent in this type of collaborative participatory arts is agentic, and Kathryn depicts it as supportive of cultural wellbeing.

The participatory mechanisms that Kathryn acknowledged in arts education were similarly singled out by primary science teacher Jacky as integral to the inquiry learning approach she employed in teaching science. She articulated her perception of how cultural wellbeing was supported in her class:

What I would expect to see for [students'] cultural wellbeing is the culture we are trying to create which is the culture of science, which is participation and discovery...I want to activate the students to be student researchers, student learners on their own and to not rely on the teachers. By having pairs and tables [working] together it's trying to create that mini-culture where they feel empowered to research and communicate their discoveries with each other. (Jacky)

Jacky described science as a discipline that has its own culture ("the culture of science"). She drew upon the culture of science to generate opportunities for students to experience and share scientific discoveries in her classes. Part of the cultural process that Jacky intended to initiate was the activation of curiosity, which she envisaged would lead to students pursuing their own further inquiries:

There's certain [curriculum] content happening, like maybe we'll be dropping balls because we're exploring gravity. Then okay, what's the next step and that's part of the science culture. What's the next question, what can we find out? It's like an ongoing constructivist process, I guess, that they keep building on what they know... Curiosity is totally encouraged. So long as they've done the bit I want them to do first. They can then be curious and do "what's the next thing". (Jacky)

Jacky's comments bring attention to the role curiosity might play in cultural wellbeing, which is a topic that has been investigated in recent studies. In a classroom community setting, curiosity can generate a motivation amongst some students to inquire further, to become question-seekers rather than just problem-answerers (Hunter & Emery, 2015). The exploratory disposition to seek out new and challenging situations brought about through curiosity is linked to positive affect (or emotion), and provides emerging evidence of links between curiosity and wellbeing (Gallagher & Lopez, 2007; Jovanović & Gavrilov-Jerković, 2014).

In these various ways educators depicted cultural processes and experiential pedagogies as offering important benefits for cultural wellbeing and offered examples of how they incorporated such processes in their classroom communities through participatory pedagogies including, but not limited to, inquiry learning, arts rich education, outdoor education and play-based learning.

5.3 Conclusion

This exploratory study found educators made multiple interpretations of cultural wellbeing, with many educators suggesting it had an affective quality which included students feeling comfortable at school. Paradoxically, some educators also

suggested cultural wellbeing involved students feeling the sense of discomfort generated by the challenge of learning.

Many educators perceived that supporting cultural wellbeing involved connecting students with people, places and cultures beyond the confines of the classroom. Educators' practices of supporting cultural wellbeing often involved venturing outside the classroom and connecting with the diversity of people and places within the community. Supporting such experiences was perceived as important for fostering a sense of connection and belonging which educators related to cultural wellbeing.

The findings reveal that in addition to there being many shared ideas about cultural wellbeing and how it can be supported in classroom communities, there were also contrasting views that reflect differences in world views and reflect contemporary social debates.

Chapter 6

Cultural wellbeing and social locations

Analysis of the data in Chapter 4 revealed that social locations influenced educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing and how they supported cultural wellbeing in classroom communities. In this chapter I discuss the findings reported for research questions 1 and 2 in Chapter 5, employing Bourdieu's (1990) logic of practice to consider socio-political and socio-economic implications of cultural wellbeing arising from the social worlds/arenas analysis.* Bourdieu's social practices theory (1977) offers theoretical tools for interrogating the findings to gain deeper insights into the variations amongst educators' perceptions.

The social worlds analysis revealed notable differences in the ways educators in high and low socio-economic status schools discussed cultural wellbeing. This led me to interrogate the ways in which social locations influenced educators' accounts. I demonstrate the ways educators' accounts revealed different material conditions within schools in low and high socio-economic locations which were consequential to

* The term social world refers to universes of discourse and the organising mechanisms of social life according to Clarke (2005). Clarke depicts society as construed by larger arenas of concern formed from multiple social worlds focused around a common interest.

how educators supported cultural wellbeing. To begin, I introduce Bourdieu's theoretical concepts which underpin this discussion.

6.1 Bourdieu's theoretical concepts

Bourdieu (1984, 1990) explored the intricacies of how social class matters in the lives of people and I draw on Bourdieu's concepts to focus on classroom communities as sites located within the social field of schooling. I develop insights into how the structures of the field of schooling, the habitus of educators, and the forms of capital they can access and activate informs educators' perceptions of and support for cultural wellbeing.

The educational achievement of children and young people is "most clearly predicted by the socio-economic level of the family, including parents' educational achievement" (Griffin, 2013, p. 4). Bourdieu theorised this phenomenon through his *Outline of a theory of practice* (Bourdieu, 1977) which has been employed widely in education research (cf. Grenfell & James, 1998; McRobbie, 1978; Mills & Gale, 2007). I employ Bourdieu's (1977, 1984) concepts of capital, habitus and field to discuss perceptions of cultural wellbeing of educators from schools that occupy widely differing social locations.

Social location, which Bourdieu also interprets as *social class*, refers to the relative circumstances that contextualise people's lives, particularly in terms of the volume of capital (economic and social goods) they possess which influences their relative position in a given field (Bourdieu, 1984). In this study I favour the use of social location, as it focuses on the power relations rather than on the characteristics of groups (Anthias, 2013). The framings through which I interpret social location are particularly informed by school socio-economic status as indicated in Section 1.1.

6.1.1 Capital

Bourdieu (1986) describes capital as a store of embodied labour that social agents can draw upon as a means to access and activate socially-located resources in furthering their own objectives. It can be likened to a reserve of currency that people accumulate throughout their lives to be exchanged or leveraged off to gain personal benefits. Bourdieu (1986) theorised three forms of capital: *economic capital* which is the mercantile resource, such as money, property and assets that are readily converted into cash. *Social capital* is the advantage that is embodied within the social groups we belong to and the connections we make with other people. *Cultural capital* is more symbolic in nature and is represented to others as indicators of class and social position. It encompasses a person's skills and credentials, including educational qualifications and can be converted into economic capital in some conditions.

Cultural capital is of particular interest in this study and is relevant both to educators' perceptions of supporting cultural wellbeing and their social locations. Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes between three types of *cultural capital* (1986) which I outline here, providing examples from the data to exemplify each form. First, *embodied cultural capital* refers to people's values, skills, knowledge and tastes (for example, the arts skills embodied by Valerie, Kathryn and Kirsty). Second, *objectified cultural capital* in the form of cultural goods and artefacts (books, instruments, machines etc., such as the literature resources that Beth draws upon in teaching English). Third, Bourdieu's concept of *institutionalised cultural capital* refers to educational attainment and qualifications, and can be viewed as the objective of school settings (for example evident in Belinda's depiction of students' performance, "where people have achieved, gone to university...and had a positive outcome with school"). Schooling is a primary setting for the cultivation and reproduction of

cultural capital according to Bourdieu (1984), giving us knowledge and know-how about the world and helping us to differentiate ourselves from those who are less well culturally endowed. Bourdieu (1986) describes the utility of cultural capital as

a hypothesis which made it possible to explain the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from the different social classes by relating academic success [...] to the distribution of cultural capital between the classes and class fractions. (p. 243)

This observation from Bourdieu has a contemporary relevance in school systems which continue to reward middle class cultural capital (i.e. English literacy and numeracy) thereby privileging those students from middle class backgrounds while disadvantaging students from other backgrounds who bring different forms of cultural capital in their virtual backpacks (Thomson, 2002).

6.1.2 Habitus

Habitus refers to a system of embodied dispositions which influences people's actions in the social world. In this study I explore how the concept of cultural wellbeing is meaningful to educators and how they support it. The social world represents the educators' individual school context. From educator to educator there were differences in their perceptions and the strategies they described for supporting cultural wellbeing in their contexts, yet there were also some regularities which appeared. Bourdieu's concept of habitus helps to explain this.

Educators' institutional habitus influenced their perceptions and the practices they describe for supporting cultural wellbeing. For example, Year 5/6 teacher Rick explained that he spent the first 15 minutes of each school day "checking in" with

students in his class to connect with what is happening in their lives outside of school. Understanding the social location of his school helps contextualise this daily routine Rick employed for supporting cultural wellbeing. The school where Rick taught is in a suburb of high social disadvantage, and his awareness that students are exposed to multiple risk factors conditions Rick to connect with their personal situations. The concept of habitus helps to depict how educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing tended to be socially located and influenced by the context of the school, and helped to understand how those perceptions are translated into practice.

Bourdieu (1977) characterises habitus as the taken for granted aspects of life that seem natural, albeit they are influenced by entrenched social expectations. Habitus “encapsulates the ways in which a person’s beliefs, ideas and preferences are individually subjective but also influenced by the objective social networks and cultural traditions in which that person lives” (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997, p. 34) which explains how habitus includes both the person and a person’s surrounds.

While the discussion of habitus here has related to the educators and their practices of supporting cultural wellbeing, habitus is also of wider relevance to the concept of cultural wellbeing in relation to students lives. Habitus underpins people’s decisions and actions, informed by their past experiences, including their home lives, understood as the primary habitus. From these background experiences people are able to envisage possible futures. School is described as a secondary habitus (Forbes & Lingard, 2015), and Bourdieu emphasised its importance, stating “the habitus transformed by schooling, itself diversified, in turn underlies the structuring of all subsequent experiences” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 87). This foundational aspect of Bourdieu’s theory of social practice is relevant in exploring educators’ varied

perceptions of cultural wellbeing and highlights the possibilities presented by schooling as a site for addressing social and cultural inequalities.

6.1.3 Field

The situational analysis conducted earlier provided a useful depiction of the social worlds peculiar to each educator's arena of teaching practice. This suggested that the variation in educators' understandings of cultural wellbeing might be due to the unique set of influences present in each of their social locations. Situational analysis depicts what influences are present in classroom communities but stops short of explaining how or why those influences effect educator practice. Bourdieu's theory of social practice provides a useful framework for understanding how and why the logics and organising principles in each educator's arena of teaching practice inform their constructions of cultural wellbeing and the practices they employ in its support.

Bourdieu considers arenas such as schooling to be fields in which social practices are governed by logics that determine which economic and cultural goods and dispositions function as capitals "and consequently as a factor explaining practices" (1984, p. 113). The position of educators in the field of schooling is influenced by the interactions between the rules of the field (as identified for example through education policies), educators' habitus and educators' capital. The objective conditions of the field shape the social spaces of struggle between various position-holders to transform or preserve what counts as dominant capital.

According to Bourdieu (1984), the specific logic of the field influences which economic and cultural goods and dispositions function as capitals "and consequently as a factor explaining practices" (p. 113). The field of schooling has its own particular logics which according to Hardy (2016) include, *inter alia*, educative logics and

accountability logics. Such logics influence what functions as valuable cultural capital. In the field of schooling, good NAPLAN results are a valued cultural capital since this is what the various departments of education reward (Hardy, 2016). The privileging and dominance of this form of achievement data serves to disprivilege and delegitimize other forms of achievement, and other forms of schooling practice that are not measured on NAPLAN tests.

Bourdieu employs multiple meanings of culture in his theory of social practice, particularly in relation to his conceptualisations of cultural capital, habitus and field. Through the concept of cultural capital Bourdieu referred to forms of culture in its visible and embodied forms (i.e. the objectified, embodied and institutionalised cultural capital previously outlined). Bourdieu further conceptualised culture through the concept of habitus, in terms of culturally shaped skills and habits, or in other words, an embodied way of knowing the world. Further, in his concept of field Bourdieu encapsulates an interpretation of culture as a way of life influenced by structures of power.

Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts, Swidler (1986) considers culture as a 'repertoire' (or tool kit) from which people can construct "strategies for action". Strategies for action are the larger ways of trying to organise a life, informed by a person's habitus, and in this study of cultural wellbeing, the focus is on how the strategies enabled by culture (as a repertoire) influence educators' support for student wellbeing. In the next section I employ Bourdieu's concepts in extending the discussion of the findings through a comparison of educators' perspectives of supporting cultural wellbeing. I draw on some parts of the interviews where social locations appear to have particular enabling and constraining influences.

6.2 “The resources are at my fingertips”: Access to cultural capital

Here I consider the ways in which the educators in this study perceived they were able to exercise agency in supporting cultural wellbeing, in particular I focus on their use of cultural capital. Educators in high SES schools described having access to specialist facilities and material resources and I will examine the various ways Beth, Dan and Chelsea drew upon such resources in supporting cultural wellbeing.

Secondary school teacher Beth was the Head of English in a high SES non-government school (ICSEA > 1100). As reported in the Findings, Beth referred to her emerging understanding of cultural wellbeing as connected with processes of identity formation. She perceived explorations of literature supported students’ developing understandings of identity formation. Beth explained some of the background to how she made available these types of experiences which were central to how she supported cultural wellbeing:

A lot of what I’m interested in is connecting the learning, having the learning at the centre of the student and the real world, and I guess literature and the texts that we study. And for me that involves cost. Because connecting to literature, there’s the cost. And some of the things we do with having speakers come in, we’ve had asylum seekers come in, and representatives of Indigenous communities, and authors [like] Alice Pung, the Australian of migrant descent who wrote the autobiography that [my students] study. And that costs money, and we can do it. And we can take them to the theatre, and we do. And I think, because the resources are at my fingertips, I use them because I’m

excited by it, but there's always this awareness that we can do this and this is the privilege that we have as a school. (Beth)

These comments show how supporting cultural wellbeing appeared to involve immersing students in cultural resources. Beth's interpretation of culture in this instance is located in legitimated forms of literature, which is valued as cultural capital amongst dominant classes (Bourdieu, 1984). Additionally, Beth confers distinction upon topical or exotic expressions of the culture of *others* (including migrant and Aboriginal authors' perspectives) which Bourdieu conceives of as *embodied cultural capital*. Cultural wellbeing is supported by Beth through enabling these types of experiences that build students' appreciation for and understanding of forms of cultural production such as literature which Kuttner (2015) indicates are central to ongoing processes of collective meaning making.

Beth perceives that she supports cultural wellbeing through the resources she accesses for students. The availability of economic capital and objectified cultural capital enables access to literary experiences in Beth's classroom community that are valued by dominant classes. She is able to pay for students to attend performances and to fund authors and poets visiting her classes. As indicated in the Findings chapter, Beth interpreted cultural wellbeing as involving students' sense of identity and forming complex understandings of the different ways in which identities are expressed and represented. Activating high quality literary experiences is a way that Beth supports the development of such understandings.

Beth is aware that the ability to purchase resources is a privilege her social location affords. In sharing her perspectives of cultural wellbeing, she voiced

concerns that the local government high school did not have similar resources available to students:

The thing I think of straight away is just resources, so I know for example, there's the fact that we can say [to students] "here's the text we're going to study, can you all go and buy it" ...or no, we will, here's \$7000 for a full 300 copies of this hard-to-get text. Here it is. Whereas with the state school it's not like that, and I've heard at a recent PD [professional development session] that they've even had their library reduced and they've been told "we can't manage all these texts in the space", and they just don't have money to buy new books. (Beth)

Beth's school makes financial resources (economic capital) available to her as the Head of English, and her decisions to purchase literary texts and experiences such as theatre excursions are informed both by the institutional habitus and the resources that are at her fingertips (Smyth & Banks, 2012). Beth perceives that the access that she has to economic and cultural capital creates a distinction (Bourdieu, 1984) between her non-government school and the nearby government school, and her awareness of the inequity between her situation and that of the government school is part of the meaning that she makes of cultural wellbeing.

Turning to Dan, the outdoor educator at another high SES non-government school (ICSEA >1100), we can see that he similarly draws on *objectified cultural capital* in the form of exclusive school facilities in support of cultural wellbeing. Having exclusive access to an array of outdoor education environments enabled Dan to personalise ways of engaging students in high quality learning experiences. His ease of access to the facilities of the school form part of the taken for granted

expectation of how he *can and should* support cultural wellbeing in the classroom which is conferred to him through the institutional habitus.

Dan described supporting cultural wellbeing by connecting students with the outdoors on “whatever level it takes” through making flexible use of the school’s multiple outdoor education facilities. Dan revealed that he had access to outdoor environments ranging from wetlands to vegetable gardens, an outdoor education campus, and farms made available by school families. These various facilities represent an array of valuable forms of *objectified cultural capital* (which, following Bourdieu, also include education resources such as texts and instructional aids and which here are interpreted as school facilities) and social capital (in the case of school families’ farms) which as Dan explains, enabled him to develop personalised programs for students:

for a lot of kids these days that perhaps don’t spend a lot of time outside, it’s an even more prevalent thing for us to work towards getting them outside and getting engaged with that. (Dan)

The freedom to draw on many different environments to engage students outdoors allows Dan to exercise his professional judgement as an educator, and to take a very personalised approach to supporting cultural wellbeing. Similar to Beth, Dan’s internalisation of the social conditions in a high SES school predisposes him to activating social and cultural capital in support of cultural wellbeing (Mills, 2008).

Educators in high SES locations described having agency to employ their chosen pedagogical approaches and to mobilise resources in accordance with their professional judgement about what is best for the children and young people in their classroom community. Access to objectified cultural capital (cultural goods in the

forms of books, artworks and specialised facilities) is one of the ways in which educators in high SES schools are facilitated to support cultural wellbeing.

The ability to access cultural resources “at their fingertips”, and to employ resources at “whatever level” demonstrates how Beth and Dan benefit from an institutional habitus that recognises their agency and legitimises their support of cultural wellbeing. Following Bourdieu, the access to resources of cultural capital, and freedom to choose how to employ them, contributes to educators’ “internalised capital”, yielding “a profit in distinction, proportionate to the rarity of the means required to appropriate them, and a profit in legitimacy, the profit par excellence, which consists in *the fact of feeling justified in being*” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 228, emphasis added). This idea speaks to the sense of right-ness Beth and Dan might feel to spend and make full use of the cultural and economic capital available to them. Indeed, it could almost be considered essential, that they would be letting the students down to not access the available capital for their students’ benefit. Educators’ internalised positions in the field of schooling are influenced by their possession of capital and are influential in the decisions they make in supporting cultural wellbeing.

A sense of legitimacy to exercise professional judgement in supporting cultural wellbeing is also evident in the account of Kindergarten teacher Chelsea, an educator in a high SES government school (ICSEA >1100). At the commencement of the interview Chelsea identified herself as a teacher with agency to direct her own teaching practice:

We are in [suburb], at a suburban school, quite a well-off community
and we have a very supportive community and they understand that I do

a lot of nature kindergarten, and they often have chosen to be in my class for that reason. (Chelsea)

There were three distinguishing characteristics of her situation that Chelsea signalled in her opening comments: the first is she teaches in a high SES or “well off” community; her teaching practice is identified as being different to standard teaching practices in schools; and parents choose to enrol their children in her class specifically because of her teaching practice. These three elements are relevant to the agency Chelsea exercises in supporting cultural wellbeing through her own preferred pedagogies. Chelsea perceives that connecting students with outdoor environments (i.e. through nature kindergarten) is important for cultural wellbeing. She legitimises her outdoor teaching practice with reference to the acceptance she has from high SES families in the local community who understand her approach and have chosen her class for their child.

Chelsea indicated she provides students with access to diverse outdoor learning spaces, explaining “a lot of our cultural wellbeing happens outside of the classroom”. She commented further: “And so we spend a lot of time outdoors in the vegetable garden, or in the [adjacent] nature reserve which has really a high degree of naturalness, with many and varied natural elements.”

Chelsea’s *embodied cultural capital*, including her knowledge and know-how, gives her a sense of ease with facilitating experiences for the kindergarten children in her class across an array of sites outside the classroom. The majority of the sites Chelsea mentioned are not *objectified cultural capital* belonging to the school but are *community cultural capital* in the surrounding area. Chelsea is located in a high SES community, and the school is close to community assets including a nature reserve

which has high environmental values for engaging children in learning experiences. Additionally, the nearby commercial area has an appealing row of international cafes and restaurants which Chelsea is able to mobilise as a cultural resource for her class. These forms of access to privileged cultural experiences are enabled by the economic capital in the local community which is also encompassed in the local community facilities. Chelsea perceives these assets are important for supporting her students' cultural wellbeing, and her account demonstrates how educators can leverage off community cultural capital in supporting cultural wellbeing.

Having discussed responses from high SES school educators Beth, Dan and Chelsea, I shift to considering how cultural capital was evident in the responses from educators in low SES schools, in particular through the account of Rick, a government school teacher. There is less evidence presented of how educators in low SES schools accessed available cultural capital because this was less present in the data. There were five low SES schools in the study and the educators from these schools spoke less about accessing cultural capital than did the educators from the four high SES schools. I argue this is likely due to there being less available cultural capital in the low SES government schools. However, as no questions were specifically asked about access to cultural capital, this cannot be established through this study, although it has been reported elsewhere (Lareau & Weininger, 2003; Sullivan, 2001). Educators in less advantaged schools appeared to be aware of the limitations of their social locations, yet the example provided by Rick demonstrates that available cultural and social capital can be accessed to create possibilities for engaging students in experiential learning opportunities.

Rick, a teacher in a low SES government school (ICSEA <900), draws upon his personal talents and practices as a means of supporting cultural wellbeing by inviting

his class to watch his team play in the basketball finals. Expressing an interpretation of cultural wellbeing as expanding students' understandings of the world, Rick prioritises giving students experiences of the world further afield than the local department store, a geographic boundary which he knows they "don't go beyond". Rick spoke of arranging tickets for the students in his class to watch him play in the finals game of the local basketball tournament at the basketball centre outside of the local suburban boundary as a way of supporting cultural wellbeing. He commented:

it gives them an experience that they've never seen before, they get to touch in with me on a personal basis knowing that I play basketball. I'm not just a teacher that's boring... and they get to be a part of something that they've never been a part of. I've got one student who plays club basketball. I've got about 10 kids that love basketball. Taking them to a place that they could actually play if they wanted to because they haven't been provided that opportunity is exciting for me. (Rick)

Rick's basketball talent, evident in being part of a team which made the finals, is a form of *embodied cultural capital*, while his *social capital* enables him to secure free tickets to the game for his class. Rick perceives the invitation for students to watch basketball played by their teacher at a competition level in the city's sports arena might offer a pathway to an imagined future for students in which they could picture themselves likewise playing a sport at a high level. In this way, Rick describes taking action to cultivate students' capacities to aspire (Appadurai, 2004). He connects his actions with students' wellbeing, commenting "I've given them free tickets before and for them to rock up happy the next day because they've expanded on the world that they live in and their wellbeing is that they've experienced something that they've never experienced before."

This activation of teacher-based social capital (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Smyth, 2004) and Rick's embodied cultural capital, which I refer to as *teacher-based cultural capital* (extending upon Smyth's concept of teacher-based social capital), combine to create an opportunity for students to access the best experience of the city's basketball competition. This demonstrates the agentic role that educators can serve in the capital accumulation process for students in less advantaged communities (Mills, 2008). Educators' varied accounts revealed the situated nature of their support for cultural wellbeing. The social locations in which educators taught and the forms and amounts of cultural capital they were able to access framed the opportunities and experiences they were able to access for their students.

6.3 “That’s not our agenda here”: Logics of practice

Bourdieu argues the logic of practice within school is part of the mechanism by which inequality is reproduced. In “The Logic of Practice”, Bourdieu (1990) details how the practical concerns of daily life condition the transmission and functioning of social or cultural forms. A tenet of Bourdieu's theory of social practice crucial to this thesis is that educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing were co-constructed in a field where particular logics of practice have come to dominate (Hardy, 2016). These tacit understandings of what schooling is about are part of the generative mechanism of habitus in Bourdieu's logic of practice wherein practices “are assumed to be both cultural, reflecting a ‘way of life’, and social, or constructed not in individual minds but rather in and between people and institutions, in other words, in fields of practice” Webb et al (2017, p. 142). Thus, the concept of cultural wellbeing was interpreted in relation to the educators' commitment to the presuppositions which are dominant within the field of schooling (Bourdieu, 1990).

In this section I discuss the ways logics of practice influenced how some educators made meaning of the concept of cultural wellbeing, noting that their meanings were informed by their social and cultural locations. I present a vignette based on Lauren's interview before expanding into a broader discussion of cultural wellbeing and logics of practice in Australian schooling.

Lauren, a prep teacher in a government school (ICSEA <900), described the socio-economic background of the children in her classroom, "In my school community it's quite a low socio-economic area, these children are frequently coming from homes where there's discontent, homes where there's domestic violence. They're coming to school and need a place to be nurtured."

Lauren perceived she supported cultural wellbeing by trying to understand the backgrounds of the children in her class and their families. She indicated that she prefers play-based learning as a pedagogy for supporting children's learning and cultural wellbeing as she explained in the following extended interview extract:

We're dealing with five-year-olds... and play is their day, play is the way they learn, play is the way they express who they are. And *as an expression of who they are, their culture is everything*. Play to me is the driver for how a child expresses themselves in that setting. And I feel, honestly, I can say to you that every single day is a conflict for me currently, because I feel like I can't engage children in play the way I would like to. And there are lots of reasons for that. It's definitely not what has been the push in the school that I'm currently in in terms of curriculum delivery. In fact, it's probably been ousted.

Sherridan: Can you tell me what you mean, what has not been the push?

Lauren: Play-based learning - play in in any form in fact in a prep setting has kind of been ousted.

Lauren's discussion of play as the way prep children express who they are and how "as an expression of who they are, their culture is everything" placed play as a practice that was central to her interpretation of cultural wellbeing. However, she perceived that play in the prep setting has been "ousted" or sidelined in other words. Asked to explain further, Lauren's comments reveal a detailed picture of a dominant logic of practice at work:

Lauren: I actually have been called at times to explain why I am playing inside a prep classroom. [She voices authoritatively in role of administrator] "Why when I walked in here, [she repeats] why when I walked in here were these children playing?"

Sherridan: ...And that's by the school administration basically?

Lauren: Yes, yep.

Sherridan: So, what do they expect to see when they walk in there?

Lauren: They expect to be seeing children sitting at desks I believe.

Sherridan: Doing what?

Lauren: Doing handwriting probably [laughs wearily]. And, you know, maths looking at a board [pauses]. Yes. I have had very passionate heated, [um] open and honest conversations with administration, with

heads of curriculum, with deputy principals, with principals about why I believe play-based learning should be the way that we are going for children. And they, you know, they nod sometimes, [pauses] nod their heads, and then say “yes but that’s not our agenda here”.

Sherridan: And what is their agenda?

Lauren: [Um] I think their agenda is achieving you know, optimum results on NAPLAN in year three, and if I’m drumming sight words into their five-year-olds then perhaps they’ve got a better chance of achieving, you know, acceptable data when it comes to year 3. I believe that’s what the agenda is.

Bourdieu theorises schooling practices as products of the relationship between habitus on one hand and logics of the field of schooling on the other (Thompson, 1991). Lauren’s comments reveal the influence of the dominant accountability logic of practice in the school system on the institutional habitus of schooling. Good NAPLAN results have become “a form of valued capital” (Hardy, 2016, p. 102) within the contemporary logics in the field of schooling practices. These logics influenced Lauren’s perceptions of the pedagogies she could or *could not* legitimately implement as a teacher (as her account of being not allowed to engage children in play-based learning revealed). I argue that an accountability logic of practice was evident in Lauren’s situation, wherein the school leadership in the school in which she worked prioritised what I refer to as *NAPLAN pedagogies*. This includes rote learning of numeracy and literacy skills and pedagogical practices such as “drumming sight words” into prep students in preparation for them achieving “acceptable data” on their Year 3 NAPLAN tests.

Lauren's comments reveal how the conditions of the field become internalised as practices that are embodied as a part of educators' habitus. There is a struggle for dominance of logics in a field (Webb et al., 2017), and in the field of education, the dominance of accountability logics of practice renders other logics less possible. This can create internal conflict for educators such as Lauren who may personally prioritise different logics, such as wellbeing logics. Educators' practices appeared to be shaped by the situations of the students in the classroom, by school leadership, by broader accountability requirements and by the resources educators are able to access. At the same time, the logics that come with being immersed in school environments are internalised and become a part of the institutional habitus that shapes educators' practices.

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I explored educators' accounts of mobilising cultural capital in supporting cultural wellbeing in the field of schooling. There appeared to be an ease of access to privileged forms of cultural capital for high SES groups, while some educators in low SES schools faced constraints that made activating cultural capital more difficult. Further, educators with greater volumes of dominant cultural capital in high SES schools conveyed a sense of perceived legitimacy to support cultural wellbeing through employing their preferred pedagogies in their classroom community, which was less evident amongst educators from low SES schools. The relative ease and struggle to access and activate cultural capital revealed socially reproductive patterns in how educators supported cultural wellbeing. In the next chapter I shift to exploring educators' cultural locations and their interpretations of cultural wellbeing.

Chapter 7

Towards a typology of cultural wellbeing

Memo: September 2017 The questions continue to emerge

I presented my developing ideas of cultural wellbeing at the European Education research association in Croatia. Following my presentation, the questions asked by audience members had a common theme about them which basically asked what is cultural about cultural wellbeing?

After discussing this feedback with my supervisors on returning to Australia we decided that I should develop a third research question which might help to more clearly depict educators' interpretations of cultural wellbeing.

Research question 3 asks *what might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?* The findings of research questions 1 and 2 suggest that cultural wellbeing can be viewed as a relational construct (Gergen, 2009) involving the interactions between school culture, recognition of the people in classroom communities, and their participation in the cultural production of schooling. I developed a typology of cultural wellbeing to depict the interactions of these aspects, noting that there may be other aspects to this typology that emerge in future studies. I distinguish between three Types (or modalities) in the typology:

School culture: **the ways** we do things around here

Recognition: **who** is recognised in school **and how**

Cultural participation and production: **what** we do in school

This chapter introduces the typology of cultural wellbeing and the in next chapter I apply the typology to interrogate how cultural locations influenced educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing and practices of supporting it in classroom communities. Throughout this study I remain committed to not locking down a definition of cultural wellbeing, instead remaining open to there being further contributions to the concept. It is anticipated that this study of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities and the synthesising of the key categories from the findings into a proposed typology of cultural wellbeing will go some way to supporting educators in working with cultural and community complexities in schools.

7.1 Visualising the typology of cultural wellbeing

The activities described by educators located schooling practices in multiple environments and within multiple communities. Educators sought to enhance their students' cultural wellbeing and learning by employing opportunities at multiple layers of the ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1995b) as depicted by Figure 7.1 below.

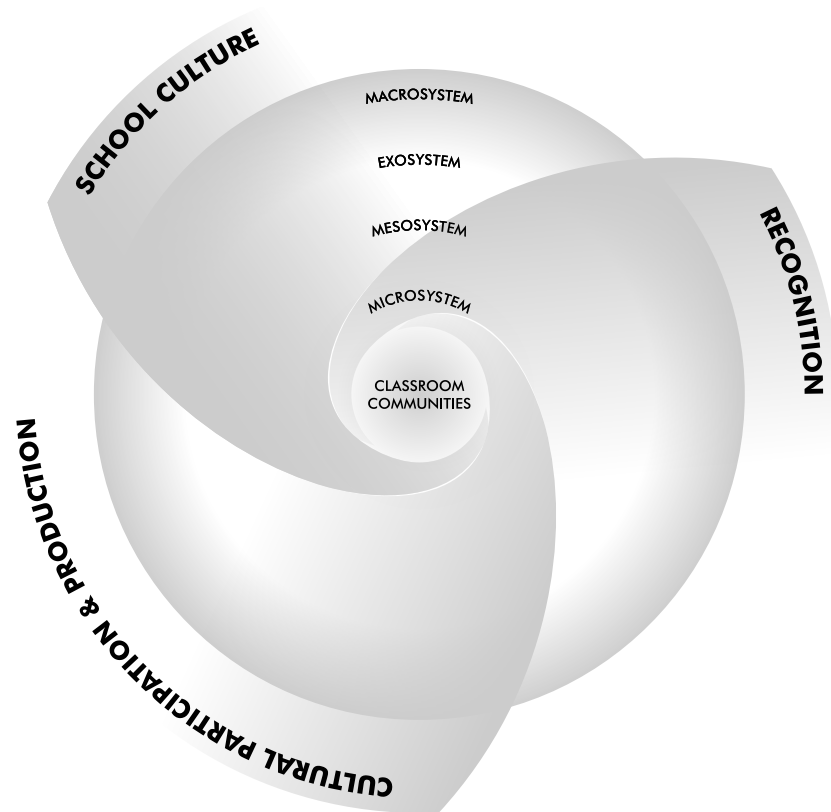


Figure 7.1 - Visual representation of the typology of cultural wellbeing
incorporating the system levels of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological
systems model

This depiction of the proposed typology of cultural wellbeing builds upon Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems model and has been overlaid onto a representation of that model to depict the multiple influences from various levels of the schooling system which interact within classroom communities. More specifically, the typology of cultural wellbeing draws attention to the influences on cultural wellbeing from the macrosystem and exosystem in classroom interactions;

meso-layer interactions between school life and home life; and microsystem interactions between educators and students which were present in the data.

This study was informed by Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1995b) bioecological model and Gergen's (2009) concept of relationality to focus on the classroom community as embedded in other systems of increasing scale (i.e. exosystem, macrosystem as introduced in Section 2.1.4). I depict classroom communities at the microsystem level of the ecological system of schooling where they are situated in broader economic, social, cultural and political spatial relations (Sanagavarapu, 2010; Seung Lam & Pollard, 2006). Educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing alluded to conditions and interactions involving different layers of the schooling ecological system. This was demonstrated in the ways that educators described broad social conditions and cultural values (located in the macrosystem) as they presented in the classroom, which also was impacted by students' family lives (in the microsystem) and the types of institutional supports and resources educators were able to access (located in the exosystem) as discussed previously in Chapter 6.

7.2 Type 1 School culture

The first Type of this typology of cultural wellbeing relates to what is widely referred to as "school culture" which is also sometimes called "school climate". School culture is described as "a fairly stable set of taken-for-granted assumptions, shared beliefs, meanings, and values that form a kind of backdrop for action" (Smircich, 1985, p. 58). High school teacher Mary described school culture as part of a multi-level phenomenon:

To me there are a number of levels of cultural wellbeing. First of all, there's a student's background. That's one cultural level, with what

kind of experiences they have had at home. And then you've got different cultures happening in the school. So, there's the class culture which is socio-economic status, and then there's a school's culture. All of these things are interacting together and that's what the teacher has to address. (Mary)

Here Mary reflected on the multiple influences on cultural wellbeing which converge in the classroom community. The influences that Mary describes are reminiscent of those indicated in the social worlds analysis (Chapter 4), which form a background to how cultural wellbeing is interpreted and supported in classroom communities. Furthermore, the 'levels' that Mary describes broadly accord with the micro, meso and macro layers of an ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Of particular importance is Mary's idea that the interactions between the various levels produce effects that arise in the classroom, becoming part of the educator's domain in the process. The elements of students' background lives to which Mary drew attention, and the interactions between various levels of the ecological system of schooling, were reflected in other educators' interpretations of the relationship between school culture and cultural wellbeing. Educators' emphases on accountability demands, bureaucratic, community and other influences on school culture signalled the influences of exo and macro levels of the ecological system of schooling (Bronfenbrenner, 1995).

Most educators in the study perceived that cultural wellbeing related to the values that are an inherent part of the culture of a school (Deal & Peterson, 2016; Hiebert & Stigler, 2017). In the *school culture* Type, educators signalled that there were tensions surrounding the origin of these values and the degree to which values were explicit or implicit in the school.

Educators held contrasting views about from where a school's shared values originate. For co-producers of a school-community arts project Stella and Charles, supporting cultural wellbeing began with finding shared values and purpose by "identifying what's common" amongst people in the local school community. In contrast to this view, some other participants perceived that the school culture is established by the leadership of the school. Outdoor education teacher Dan suggested the school culture would be based on "a set of values the school has" and that it is "up to the people who are in leadership positions... to ultimately work out and implement the culture" in a school. This view of a top-down origin of the values within a school contrasted with Charles and Stella's ideas of community-led values. While the idea of shared values within a school community appeared to be related by educators to cultural wellbeing, these widely differing perspectives reveal that there are multiple views as to the source of the shared values and how they are practiced, which can become a source of conflict in a school community (Deal & Peterson, 2016).

Further complexifying this area of relationality between school culture and cultural wellbeing is the locating of students' own values in relation to those of the school leadership and the community. While Dan perceived that it was the role of school leadership to implement a set of values in a school that support cultural wellbeing, he also noted his role was "working with students to find their own cultural place". He explained that "the culture an individual or a person might set for themselves would be based around... their values, what they find important, the way they conduct themselves on a day-to-day basis", reflecting an individualised view of cultural wellbeing. The different facets of school culture drawn upon in these comments from Mary, Charles, Stella and Dan depict the diversity of perspectives of

the various interests of the school, students and the community and how these interact with cultural wellbeing.

One educator particularly discerned her own teaching practice from the wider school culture. Kindergarten teacher Chelsea placed emphasis on the culture she fostered in her kindergarten class, and separated this out as distinct from the rest of her school due to the nature's kindergarten program she implemented. While the perspectives of the educators presented above directly spoke of the school culture in relation to cultural wellbeing, Chelsea instead focused on the culture she created in her classroom community as “a healthy culture”, and “a culture of support for one another” which were ideas she connected with cultural wellbeing. Chelsea spoke of allowing her very young students to work together in the school yard and gardens, building structures with tree branches, rocks and other natural materials. She made mention of her school culture when describing her nature-based practice but did not suggest the school culture was an enabler of that practice. Instead it appeared that she perceived that she created conditions for cultural wellbeing with her class through employing pedagogical approaches which differ from conventional classroom teaching approaches.

Chelsea noted she taught in a government school in a high socio-economic area (ICSEA>1100) and here I give attention to the less obvious influences of this underlying condition of socio-economic status which is inseparably linked to school culture. There is a set of preconditions that enable Chelsea's practice, which exist both within the embodied habitus of the students and within the institutional habitus of the school (Bourdieu, 1984), and in this way are part of the school culture.

Chelsea described being able to engage young children in outdoor nature play which often involves a high degree of risk, self-reliant behaviour and student agency (Elliot & Chancellor, 2014). These are dispositional qualities that are advantageous for this type of self-directed nature play pedagogy. As detailed in Chapter 6, students from high socio-economic areas tend to arrive at school with their virtual schoolbags filled with the valued cultural capital that matches the cultural capital recognised by schooling (Thomson, 2002). While this is often thought of in terms of early exposure to objectified cultural capital such as books and art for example, another less obvious form of cultural capital is the embodied disposition cultivated in a high socio-economic background. This typically includes the confidence and self-belief or “assured optimism” of success (Forbes & Lingard, 2015); in short, the dispositions which enable successful participation by a group of kindergarten children in a nature’s play program. These are pre-conditions which support the success of Chelsea’s practice although she does not make reference to this. In this way, the children’s dispositions appear to be taken for granted as Bourdieu described (1990, p. 139). “When distinctive dispositions are accepted and acquired as self-evident from early childhood, they have all the appearances of naturally distinguished nature, a difference which contains its own legitimation.” Chelsea is able to legitimate her practice of engaging children in the outdoors in part because the children are able to behave in a way that constitutes the learning outdoors as a successful practice, and as evidence of her program’s success.

Chelsea indicates that her nature’s kinder program is endorsed by the “supportive community” in the (affluent) local suburb who “understand that I do a lot of nature kindergarten, and they often have chosen to be in my class for that reason”. In relation to the institutional habitus of the school, this community support further

legitimises her pedagogical approach; she has the support of the families to take her kindergarten class outside, to engage her students in nature play and expose them to the risks inherent in nature. These freedoms that Chelsea can exercise in her practice suggest her school recognises her professional judgement and has confidence in both Chelsea and her students to ‘carry and carry out’ this practice (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 257). Chelsea’s practice was enabled by the broader social location in which she teaches, forming part of the institutional habitus which shapes the school culture.

7.3 Type 2 Recognition of students

The second Type relates to how students are recognised within the school and the classroom throughout the school years. Many educators shared the view that supporting cultural wellbeing required the creation of classroom conditions in which all students were recognised and valued. They spoke of the need to “value each person” and to “recognise every student’s contributions” and they described a range of rationales for this. For some it was to reduce individuals’ isolation within the classroom group, while others sought to maintain a harmonious classroom climate. There were also educators who wanted to increase students’ recognition of diversity in order to normalise difference in classroom communities.

The idea of recognition as foundational to a harmonious classroom environment was shared by Kindergarten teacher Chelsea and Prep teacher Lauren, who described the importance of valuing difference. Lauren spoke of taking time to meet with all families in her class so she could better understand her students’ backgrounds and draw upon that understanding to encourage students’ involvement in her class.

Chelsea sought to create opportunities for students to encounter the diversity of the local community in order to help them appreciate that while “we all share many similarities, everybody is also different and difference is valuable”. While a broadly harmonious idea of inclusion evident in Chelsea’s comments appeared to underlie their approaches to recognition in the early years of Prep and Kindergarten, for some educators, particularly those in secondary schools, this Type appeared to take a more critical and challenging orientation.

For Beth and Kirsty, creating spaces for dialogue and expressions of difference in ways that are respectful and foster belonging appeared to form a valued approach to teaching at the secondary school level. Beth described provoking her students to enquire into their sense of self and their place relative to the wider world through their classroom discussions. She perceived that this type of personal exploration supported cultural wellbeing because it encouraged her students to surface their own perspectives and locate those perspectives in broader discourses when discussing topics in the English class. Beth commented “I think the individual voice is crucial, but I think if that’s not balanced with ‘well this is me, where do I fit in the place of things?’, then there’s something lacking in terms of wellbeing”. Beth’s perspective accords with Honneth’s (2004) notion of recognition involving people becoming aware of themselves as both *particular* and *full members* of social communities, in terms of being a unique individual *and also* being a member of a common humanity. Through her comments Beth connected cultural wellbeing with this dialectical tension between the recognition of students’ personal views and their relationship to the wider world.

The idea of challenging and extending students’ thinking about their own views was also evident in Kirsty’s practice of creating a space for dialogue in the art

class. Connecting with a shared topic of relevance to the region – a community art project about the future of the town’s declining timber industry, Kirsty initiated class discussions about this topic which has been the source of bitter divisions amongst the local population. This was a sometimes difficult and oppositional process, yet Kirsty perceived a benefit to cultural wellbeing came from opening up the dialogue amongst students to make for more diverse discussions that “might change or start some of this questioning rather than a black and white scenario” (in reference to a polarised debate) and to open up spaces for less prominent voices. Kirsty made the comment “for me, when I thought about cultural wellbeing it’s that idea of having diversity and belonging. When you belong, you have a reason to be.” This view gave importance to the recognition of diversity and the accompanying sense of belonging as creating conditions for cultural wellbeing.

Honneth (2004) found the wellbeing potential of social groups is directly linked to the provision of conditions of mutual recognition. He described mutual recognition as a precondition of individual self-realisation, echoing the earlier work of Wenger (1998) who argues that the defining characteristic of participation in social exchange is the presence of mutual recognition, without which the individual remains subject to injustice and inequality. In this area, Aboriginal educator and artist Valerie’s interpretation of cultural wellbeing critiqued contemporary schooling practices which in her view misrecognise Aboriginal people:

It’s like “Don’t worry about what’s out the window, all you have to know is in the computer.” I think the way we do education now is institutionalising children, they become like little marching soldiers – finish your education – don’t look left or right, just straight ahead, to get that job and slot yourself into the next machine. We’ve lost touch

with the reality of the natural world – it’s all driven by the machine
now. (Valerie)

Valerie described there being cultural wellbeing benefits for Aboriginal students experiencing connections with ancestral history and an increased “sense of belonging and engaging” with country. Accordingly, Valerie valued approaches to learning that recognise Aboriginal connections to country, which overcome the confines of the classroom and what she perceived as students’ “alienation from the natural world”. Valerie placed importance on young Aboriginal people recognising their heritage and being able to draw strength from that shared history in their schooling. In her critique of contemporary schooling approaches Valerie echoed Kukutai and Walter’s (2015, p. 325) call for “expanding the recognition space” through recognition of Indigenous geographic and cultural diversity and students’ Aboriginal identities..

7.4 Type 3 Participation in cultural production

This final Type considers the contribution to cultural wellbeing made by activities and practices of schooling in classroom communities. In particular, those practices that involve participation in cultural production and which form connections with the broader community outside the classroom.

When asked about their perceptions of cultural wellbeing, several educators identified cultural participation as a *precondition for cultural wellbeing* and they emphasised the importance of schools supporting students’ rights to participate. These educators employed multiple interpretations of “cultural production” when describing the activities they undertook, but each described activity structures and cultural

routines with an emphasis on collaboration, social constructivism, experiential learning and open-endedness.

There were some particular learning areas which offered a depth of insight into this area of cultural production; arts education was prominent among these. Arts educators were enthusiastic advocates of the cultural wellbeing benefits they associated with cultural production through the arts. They spoke of the arts as “powerful” for supporting cultural wellbeing which provided a medium through which people could relate to one another, relate to the places in which they live, and to develop understandings about what Belinda described as “the greater context of our position in the globe”. Educators perceived that through participation in arts projects, students join with others in making a contribution to something bigger than themselves in a process that generates experiences of “meaning and belonging”. As arts educator Kathryn commented “our art is what holds us all together”.

Educators described how students engaged in processes of conceptual inquiry through the arts. For example, in the cultural arts program, Kathryn and Valerie introduced students to themes of identity and community, reinterpreting traditional Aboriginal symbols in contemporary forms of cultural production. Engaging students in a diverse suite of contemporary and traditional arts practices which sometimes involved immersive on-country activities, Valerie and Kathryn perceived that participation in cultural production supported cultural wellbeing for Aboriginal students. This example is expanded in further detail in Section 7.5.

Some educators suggested the arts were a vehicle for meaning making which they perceived supported cultural wellbeing. Sharing in artistic production provided opportunities for students to make meaning of their experiences, which sometimes

included conflict and alienation. Arts educators spoke of students with experiences of bullying and other traumas who used arts processes and production to work through personal incidents. Kirsty observed that the arts can “help [students] push through that experience to give them strength”. At the larger group level, Kirsty perceived that collaborative arts processes provided a platform for making meaning together “allow[ing] for there being varieties of viewpoints and acceptance and diversity”.

The billycart project Charles and Stella described was an example of co-operative cultural production in a shared space based around a project that brought prep students together with their families and community volunteers. Stella spoke of the cultural wellbeing benefits of “participating with other people in your community where you live” explaining “It’s about the richness of the life and the connections that you have within your place that you reside”. Charles emphasised the sense of place and belonging that participants could enjoy as a consequence of coming together as a community to build the billy carts. “Being able to creatively express your sense of place or to have an exchange of sense of place with someone” was how Charles perceived the concept of cultural wellbeing which he related to participation in cultural production.

These benefits of participation in cultural production that the educators described are well supported by existing research from the field of arts education. Arts projects have the potential to be empowering and transforming for children from a wide range of backgrounds (Ewing, 2010). Further, arts rich education has been found to have benefits for interpersonal skills, psychological wellbeing, and cultural awareness (Ewing, 2010; Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010; Harland et al., 2000). Educators in this study indicated that participation in such projects contributed to cultural wellbeing through an array of individual and relational benefits they

generated for students. In particular the educators noted that cultural production created opportunities for strengthening connections between students and their families and communities which were beneficial for cultural wellbeing.

Examples of participation in cultural production were not limited to accounts from arts educators. Appendix G summarises the practices that educators described employing to support cultural wellbeing. It shows that several other educators perceived cultural wellbeing was enhanced by involving their students in activities that increased their involvement with the broader school community of family, volunteers, and other community members. For example, in discussing cultural wellbeing Mary made reference to the installation of a display of the Childhood Memories project in the library by the students in the Year 9/10 Introduction to Sociology and Psychology class.

The processes of cultural production, which Kuttner (2015) describes as including an ongoing process of collective meaning making through the creation of various forms of symbolic representation, can be seen to have effects on the other Types. For example, in her comments about the installation of the Childhood Memories display (discussed above in relation to the third Type, cultural production), Mary also made reference to the sense of pride that students took from their work being recognised by their peers and other teachers and staff within the school, which could be viewed as relevant to the second Type (Recognition). Mary did not describe how the installation of student work in the library impacted the overall school culture which limits the claims that can be made about the first Type, however it can be deduced that this initiative demonstrated that the school valued students' work and that this could positively influence school culture.

7.5 Towards an ecological perspective of the typology of cultural wellbeing

Through the typology of cultural wellbeing I propose that there are links between cultural production and recognition that can benefit school culture and that the interactions between these Types can generate cultural wellbeing in the classroom community. I depict this through the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), using the example of the cultural arts class mentioned earlier in this chapter and locating the practices with reference to the micro, meso and macro layers of the ecological system to demonstrate interactions between the various levels. This example draws upon the interviews with Kathryn and Valerie who co-facilitated a cultural arts program for students in Years 4-6.

As a major school project for the semester, Kathryn and Valerie decided to involve students in producing a rug for the town's new community centre and chose to hold the rug making workshops in the community centre as Kathryn explained: "the [deidentified] Centre is new, and a lot of the kids won't have been there. It's got the library attached, and if they haven't been in there it's a non-familiar space. I want it to be a familiar space". Through the lens of the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1995) this project can be understood to generate multiple interactions at multiple levels of the model. I describe these interactions and locate these within both the bioecological perspective and the typology of cultural wellbeing.

These school workshops were conducted in the community centre during school time once per week for a school term. During the workshops the school students taught community members how to use the latch-hook and the felting tools, explaining and demonstrating the techniques for forming loops and felting sections of

the rug. In this way the project generated meso-level interactions between the microsystem of the school and the microsystem of the community centre.

The design of the rug was inspired by culturally important petroglyphs from the region. These ancestral carvings are an important part of Aboriginal history and culture (Type 2). The history of the petroglyphs was discussed and shared with students over the course of this project. The workshop sessions enabled school students to form new and different connections within their community through the interactions of working alongside and having extended conversations with community members. The recognition of Aboriginal culture in schooling practices can be depicted as a meso-level interaction between the macrosystem of Aboriginal culture and ideologies and the microsystem of the school culture (Type 1), through the cultural production of the community rug (Type 3).

Signalling some of the complexity of locating the source of the wellbeing benefits of the initiative Kathryn commented:

I can't ever work out what's most important, the conversation or the doing or whether they're all just one and the same, in that sometimes the conversation is important, and sometimes just the doing, just the making of something and being silent in your space is important and not having a conversation (Kathryn).

The activity structure offered by the students and community members working together, latch-hooking and felting one large rug, created opportunities for students to take up different identity positions: to experience themselves as artists; as able to lead other people learning a craft; as talented; and as holders of Aboriginal knowledge. The typology of cultural wellbeing places focus on this community rug-

making initiative in terms of the recognition and valuing of Aboriginal students' backgrounds (Type 2) and the different way of "doing schooling" (Type 1) that the cultural production of the community rug-making (Type 3) generated.

Students formed new skills, connections and identity positions through their experiences of working with other people in the workshops in the local community centre. Referring to the cultural arts group of Year 4-6 Aboriginal students she was working with at the time, Valerie commented "this little group here, we have good cultural wellbeing. We may not be geniuses, but it's good for them". This example offered depicts the three Types interacting and bringing multiple layers of the ecological system into interaction, and I propose it is the combined effect of these interactions that generates the benefits to cultural wellbeing that Valerie and Kathryn perceive.

7.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I drew upon the findings of this study to develop a tentative typology of cultural wellbeing. The findings of this study suggested that cultural wellbeing can be generated through interactions between school culture, recognition of the people in classroom communities, and their participation in the cultural production of schooling which were key categories in the data analysis. These three categories formed the basis for the typology of cultural wellbeing which I introduced in this chapter. I discussed the typology with reference to the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), employing an example described by participants in the study as the basis for depicting how schooling interactions can generate cultural wellbeing benefits.

Chapter 8

Cultural locations

In this chapter I explore educators' cultural locations and consider how these might have influenced their perceptions of cultural wellbeing. I interpret cultural locations as the cultural frameworks people use as normative reference points (Blackford, 2003). The typology of cultural wellbeing in Chapter 7 serves here as a framework for discussing educators' cultural positions. In the first section I consider how cultural location influenced two educators' interpretations of cultural wellbeing with reference to *school cultures* that are located within the dominant (hegemonic) culture. In Section 2, I explore how Valerie and Kathryn's cultural positioning informed their views that *recognition* of their Aboriginal students' cultural backgrounds was key to supporting cultural wellbeing.* In Section 3, I explore how one arts educator's cultural positioning contributed to her perception that *cultural production* and participation are significant enablers of support for cultural wellbeing. In that section I will draw on Kirsty's data to exemplify how educators draw upon

* I draw on the terms "cultural locations" and "cultural positioning" in this chapter. I interpret cultural locations as the cultural frameworks people use as normative reference points (Blackford, 2003), as indicated in the opening paragraph. I employ the term cultural positioning drawing upon Hermans' (2001) interpretation as individuals' active processes of positioning themselves in particular situations.

forms of cultural production which bring students into dialogue with each other and their community.

In concluding this chapter, I consider the interaction of the three Types. I will argue that the typology of cultural wellbeing can help to raise awareness of cultural inequalities in schooling and guide educators to take action to foster experiences that support cultural wellbeing.

8.1 School culture

This first exploration of the influences of cultural location on perceptions of cultural wellbeing engages with educators' accounts of the school culture in well-resourced schools which are broadly representative of the dominant (hegemonic) culture: Dan, an outdoor educator at an affluent non-government school, and Ryan, an educator in his first year in the profession teaching “gifted extension” at a similarly affluent non-government school.

As previously outlined, Dan describes his role in supporting students' cultural wellbeing as helping them take best advantage of the many opportunities afforded by their cultural location. He perceives that his students can achieve many possible future trajectories, and that supporting their cultural wellbeing is an exercise in helping them choose the path to which they are best suited.

For Ryan, supporting cultural wellbeing in his classroom communities relates to raising self-awareness amongst dominant cultural groups. He teaches a “student directed” program to a “gifted” middle-class student cohort who, he perceives, are somewhat oblivious to the consequences their culture has for others. He sees a part of

his role in supporting cultural wellbeing is to instil in students an awareness of the impacts their dominant culture has on non-dominant, minority cultures.

The culture in which Dan, Ryan, and their students are located can be described as one of privileging academic achievement, where the school and school community have high expectations that the students will be academically and economically successful. Dan was immersed in an institutional habitus that fostered an individualised approach to supporting cultural wellbeing. He participated in a commodified model of schooling which positions the work of teaching as meeting the needs of individual student consumers. He indicated his department has its own set of goals for students to achieve, but recognised his role is primarily in service of the students' individual needs. This is reflective of a school culture of largesse, of individualised support, and of assured success (Forbes & Lingard, 2015). Ryan meanwhile, described a similarly student-centric circumstance, saying his students are schooled in a "post knowledge economy, where knowledge is at our fingertips" and said he "tend[s] to have really high expectations" of his cohort of gifted students. He perceived that students in his classroom community enjoy the support of a well-resourced student-focused school and he conveyed the concern that students' complacency about the future represents a risk to their success.

Both schools enjoy the same privileged context in which a habitus characterised by freedom, self-direction, and assured success places their students at an advantage relative to others (Forbes & Lingard, 2015). The students in these locations have an abundance of opportunities and a wealth of resources being employed on their behalf. Advantage for these students is not only found in the social, cultural and economic capitals of their location, but also in the relative differences between themselves and students from less advantaged cultural locations. Students in

Dan's and Ryan's schools typically embark on their education from a privileged background where the cultural capital is similar to that valued by the school (Thomson, 2002). Their location within the dominant culture and the alignment between home and school cultural capital fosters in students a sense of assured optimism (Forbes & Lingard, 2015). Consequently, not only are the school resources they have access to significant, the absence of limiting factors is a key characteristic of the cultural location that informs Dan's and Ryan's perceptions of cultural wellbeing. In this cultural context, supporting cultural wellbeing is concerned not with overcoming disadvantage, but in maximising advantage.

So how do their cultural locations influence Dan and Ryan's perceptions of cultural wellbeing? The commonalities in their cultural locations appear to have affected their perceptions in similar ways. Dan describes supporting cultural wellbeing by prompting students to consider their future selves and to contemplate the person "they want to be". This involves him provoking their thinking about how they can "be the best person... that person who is going to play a role in society" in their lives beyond school. The students' cultural (and socio-economic) backgrounds grant them the opportunities and freedom to define the lives they want for themselves, and Dan perceives that provoking students' thinking in this area is key to supporting their cultural wellbeing. Part of this, he says, is "working with students to find their own cultural place" and helping them "developing that for themselves".

In Dan's formulation of cultural wellbeing, the school's role is to provide the provocation that get students contemplating "what values do I want to start to think about if I'm going to be the best person I'm going to be". He describes the school's outdoor program offering an array of environmental experiences and facilities that give "each individual student an opportunity to engage on their level...on whatever

level that takes”. Dan explains that the school’s multiple environmental assets are employed in the program to give “a level of exposure to that environment *for each person to take what they need from it*” (emphasis added). His focus on the interests of *each* student reflects an individualising discourse of wellbeing. This instrumentalist philosophy is in keeping with the school culture which emphasises individual achievement and the cultivation of successful individuals, reflecting the school’s neoliberal values and individualised approach to student support (Fielding, 2004; Forbes & Lingard, 2015).

Although he teaches in a different (non-government) school, Ryan similarly perceives that supporting his students’ cultural wellbeing is related to the freedoms and privileges they enjoy. Ryan recognises he and his students “belong to the dominant culture” and he considers an important aspect of supporting their cultural wellbeing is to raise their consciousness of what it means to be part of the dominant culture. Ryan perceives he supports cultural wellbeing by troubling his students’ ideas about their own cultural context to “force them to think about what is Australian culture” and “imagine themselves in someone else’s shoes”. Ryan says of himself “I’ve never felt like I’ve had a culture because I’ve belonged to the dominant culture”. He acknowledges that being “white in an affluent country” puts him “on the top of the pile in terms of privilege.” He also says that the students in his “pretty monocultural school” tell him “they don’t feel cultural” and say they “don’t know what it is to be Australian”.

Ryan perceives that his students are unaware of their own position in the dominant culture and that his role is to raise their awareness of what that means for people from other non-dominant cultural locations. The school culture in which Ryan’s students are educated is one in which they can speak for themselves and act

with freedom (Fielding, 2004). Ryan perceives he supports cultural wellbeing by making his students aware of these freedoms that arise from their location within the dominant culture, which he suggests they take for granted. He challenges their thinking and stimulates their debate and discussion so that they are able to speak up about past and present civilisations, giving them opportunities to speak into conversations about future prospects for civilisations and the broader culture.

8.2 Recognition

In this section I explore how the cultural positioning of educators working with Aboriginal students informed their views that *recognition* of their students' cultural backgrounds was key to supporting cultural wellbeing. A set of assumptions about students is implied by curriculum design, standardised assessments, school cultures, and the attitudes and discourses of broader society. The sum of these expectations is represented by what Ulrikson (2009) calls the “implied student”, an idealised representation of the student for whom the education system has been designed and delivered. In this section I will discuss the cultural wellbeing of students who, according to the educators who teach them, are dissimilar to the implied student and who the education system fails to recognise or cater to their culturally located education and wellbeing requirements.

Aboriginal educator Valerie described the importance of recognising Aboriginal students' culture in supporting cultural wellbeing. Her perception of cultural wellbeing centred around Aboriginal students recognising and valuing their Aboriginal identities, and for their Aboriginality to be recognised and valued by others. Valerie commented, “I think it's really important that the children have pride in their Aboriginal culture” and noted the cultural wellbeing benefits of “being with

other Aboriginal people and talking through stuff”. Valerie’s interpretation of cultural wellbeing emphasised the connections with Aboriginal people who “understand the difficulties and challenges that you come up against, and the historical aspects”.^{*} For Valerie, this appears to be part of “that understanding and knowing” that comes with recognising and valuing Aboriginality.

Valerie’s colleague Kathryn similarly perceived that cultural wellbeing involved Aboriginal students developing self-belief and self-recognition: “I think it’s important that they have pride.” Kathryn indicated that an important part of supporting cultural wellbeing was for her students to recognise the intrinsic value of who they are and where they are from. Referring to student performances she attends that involve students from her school, she commented, “The thing I notice with many children [from here] who step onto the [Theatre] stage is they have no pride.... Students from here will stand with their head down as if they don’t deserve to be there” which she contrasted with the demeanour of students from other less-marginalised schools. Cultural wellbeing in Kathryn’s view involves students developing “pride just in themselves and to actually believe they are worth more than what they think they are worth”.

Both Valerie and Kathryn discussed cultural wellbeing as involving their students recognising and identifying with their Aboriginal culture. Additionally, as will be described below, both educators spoke of a need for the education system to similarly recognise and cater to their students’ Aboriginality. A challenge facing

^{*} Valerie did not explain directly what she meant by “historical aspects”, however she gave me her recent Artist Statement from an exhibition she had been commissioned for in South Australia. The artist statement described aspects of historical racism and mistreatment of Aboriginal people, particularly the way that Aboriginal people were treated as scientific specimens by anthropologists who recorded their bodily measurements and used it as a form of (scientifically racist) proof of some kind of inferiority. The artist statement given to me appears in full in Chapter 4 of (Hunter et al., 2018).

Valerie and Kathryn is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been (and continue to be) marginalised through schooling, both historically and in the present, and their student cohorts are labelled “at risk” of disengaging from schooling based on their racial and background profiles (Keddie, 2011). The school system, catering to the “implied” student, disciplines students to fit with expectations of the “good” student according to the dominant culture (Grant, 1997, p. 107). Navigating the school system is heavily reliant on meeting these expectations. That the expectations are established by the dominant culture is typically left unquestioned, and likewise, who these expectations privilege and marginalise remains largely untroubled. Evidence from Indigenous scholarship finds that “Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing are holistic, contextual, and spiritual in nature while learning takes place within reciprocal and interconnected relationships between people, nature and the land” (Brown, 2010, p. 16; see also Dockery, 2010). The following depictions by Kathryn and Valerie convey an expectation that their students’ Aboriginal identities would be recognised by teaching practice and school expectations that were more culturally informed.

Valerie critiqued the classroom-bound ways of her school, commenting “the thing about learning now is it’s mainly focused on the inside, it’s not out in the big world.” She considered this inadequate for the cultural wellbeing of her Aboriginal students because schooling “is all just learning inside a screen and the students become very alienated from the natural world.” Valerie perceives that supporting cultural wellbeing requires “being able to engage in practicing art and stuff that my ancestors have done” and that teaching “inside a screen” fails to recognise what she perceives to be her students’ “physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs.”

Her teaching colleague Kathryn was similarly critical of the failure of the school to recognise the cultural wellbeing needs of her Aboriginal students:

I would take these kids out to the farm for one lesson every term given half a chance. We would go and build huts... But no, you're not allowed to. You have to have a set number of hours that you're teaching literacy and numeracy. You have to have ticked the right amount of boxes.

(Kathryn)

Valerie and Kathryn describe what they perceive to be a misalignment between the expectations and requirements of mainstream schooling, and the cultural context of their students' lives. Valerie brought this into a critical perspective of the broader national schooling context. "I think that within the education system there's not enough told about the true histories of this place", she commented, referring to the marginalising and dispossession of Aboriginal people throughout the history of white Australia. "Some students are quite challenged by it" she says in reference to the violent history, "but the truth needs to start being told to them earlier... This place can't be separated from its history, because then we don't acknowledge and know the truth. It's like going through life with a lie."

Aboriginal culture is subject to the consequences of co-existing within the dominant national culture which is entrenched in European colonialism. Were we to consider Valerie and Kathryn's perspectives of what and how their implied *Aboriginal* student might learn, these would differ from the education system's perspectives which are largely based on the dominant ways of knowing reproduced through schooling. As Ulriksen explains, expectations of the implied student are built through curriculum policy documents (i.e. the Australian Curriculum), in addition to

the systems of assessment that reward particular performances of learning (i.e. standardised NAPLAN testing). These instruments are inscribed within curriculum and assessment policies which establish expectations that schools will develop learners who demonstrate, for example, particular levels of literacy attainment (or alternatively logical reasoning or particular narrow forms of mathematical and scientific understanding etc.).

What remains implicit, unspoken and largely unchallenged is that these performances of assessable learning output are based on dominant culture views of what is widely understood to be a literate or numerate practice (i.e. reading a book in English language; writing a persuasive essay; delivering a debate; calculating equations; reading a map). These are particular performances of learning that are expectations of the dominant culture and recognised and legitimated in Australian schools through curriculum, assessment and reporting regimes (i.e. the Australian Curriculum, NAPLAN, MySchool). A consequence of privileging dominant ways of knowing is that other ways of knowing and other pedagogies are marginalised and misrecognised in the school system (Keddie, 2011). This lies at the heart of the challenges to cultural wellbeing that Valerie and Kathryn perceive for their students whose experiences of schooling is characterised by marginalisation and misrecognition.

Valerie and Kathryn clearly conveyed their views that Aboriginal students at their school were not appropriately recognised by the accountability regime which dictated the practices which could and could not take place. The educators perceived that cultural wellbeing would be better supported for Aboriginal students if their connections to country, community and Aboriginal culture were recognised as legitimate sources of learning and knowledge. The delegitimising of other (i.e. non-

dominant) forms and representations of knowledge and ways of knowing is a form of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1977). While Valerie and Kathryn perceived their students' cultural wellbeing would be enhanced by the students recognising the value and significance of their own culture, the marginalisation of non-dominant cultures through the standardised assessment regime actively works against their preferred pedagogical approaches.

8.3 Cultural production

This Type draws attention to the cultural practices and production that take place within schooling that involve students in widening circles of cultural participation (Gergen, 2009). Culture is viewed here as an ongoing process of collective meaning making in which people participate through cultural production, the creation of art and various forms of symbolic representation (Kuttner, 2015). In this section I exemplify this with reference to Kirsty's arts class.

Kirsty perceives collaborative arts production can support cultural wellbeing by bringing people together into dialogue and shared meaning making, helping to overcome division and conflict. She describes participants feeling less socially excluded through participation in cultural production because “when you belong you have *a reason to be*” (emphasis added). This comment is important in seeking to understand how Kirsty's cultural location informs her perceptions of cultural wellbeing which are informed by her life experiences of teaching in the art class of a regional school and of teaching previously in a school for children with disabilities. These experiences appear to inform Kirsty's perception that the ways students engage together in the shared meaning making of collaborative cultural production can

generate a sense of belonging which is integral to her perception of cultural wellbeing.

Kirsty frames cultural wellbeing in an inclusive way as she describes the participants in the arts projects she develops “They have their stories, they have their skills, so we would like to bring them along and include them. It’s a very healthy way of looking at things.” Kirsty conveys the view that everyone has something of value to offer and describes the role she plays in creating (arts) structures or ideas “that aren’t too specific, are supportive and are responsive to what we’re hearing”. She suggests that belonging grows through the interactions within the processes of cultural production.

Kirsty engages students in arts productions that she perceives create opportunities for a multiplicity of voices to contribute to a collective undertaking. She perceives that through cultural production the space is expanded for diverse and sometimes divisive views to be shared in safe and productive ways. Kirsty explains: “people are empowered when they go through an artistic process” and that empowerment enables multiple and diverse contributions to “lifelong discussions about issues that are really pertinent”.

Kirsty’s perceptions of cultural wellbeing are influenced by the cultural locations of the K-10 school students she teaches in a region undergoing significant and controversial change following the rapid decline of the timber industry, which can be understood as a macrosystem change (Bronfenbrenner, 1995b). During the interview, Kirsty referred to a recent community arts festival called “The Festival of the Wood”. She had arranged for the students across all school grades to participate in this festival, producing collaborative art works which focused on the town’s future at

a time when livelihoods in the region were impacted after many timber workers lost their jobs. Timber and logging were ongoing topics of division between environmentalists and local timber industry families in the town, with the debate polarising ideologies of environmental conservation and employment for industry workers. Division within the community and amongst social and family groups was also evident in the classroom as Kirsty explains:

It's crucial making art, whether it's peace, about war, or sexuality.

Having some political say and making a stand is important. Even when we did the Festival of the Wood. There were those conversations in class, you remember about "the rednecks", and forestry, and "greenies".

To allow for some of these conversations, and you know these values will take a long time to change but having a platform might change or start some of this questioning rather than a black and white scenario.

(Kirsty)

This comment from Kirsty reveals how macrosystem and exosystem changes in the ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1995b) can impact upon life in classroom communities which are part of local contexts and are implicated in the cultural and socio-political conditions of the community. Engaging with diverse (and sometimes opposing) ideologies can be difficult when these reflect long-held tensions within a community which filter into classrooms. Yet "conflict is a necessary part of social justice" (Mcgregor, 2009, p. 352), an idea which resonates with Kirsty's practice of connecting students with the socio-political conditions of their contexts through culturally relevant arts teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Kirsty seeks to involve students in the wider conversations about the future of the timber town and she employs cultural production as a vehicle for generating discussion on this topic within

the class. Further, she uses the cultural production of the town's arts festival as a forum for students' voices to be heard in the community conversations.

Kirsty's approach to supporting cultural wellbeing centred around participation in cultural production, in this instance the Festival of the Wood, which enabled less prominent voices to be heard. Students shared their ideas about the town's future and the timber industry as they engaged in collaborative arts projects including the students' art map of the town and the creation of a "tree of knowledge" installation piece. This installation involved an assemblage of old books intricately folded into sculptural objects adorning the branches of a dead tree. Kirsty describes how the arts processes she employed in the classroom are a mechanism through which she supports cultural wellbeing:

we will create a structure that will say what can you create, what would you like to put in this structure? So, everyone then has this offering and within it you create this amazing energy that everyone is belonging and that they're connected and there's community. (Kirsty)

Kirsty indicates how, by participating in a community arts project, students engaged with the community as part of the broader conversations about the region's future and the cultural production that the festival initiated between people in the town. It was this need for more inclusive and expansive community dialogue that contributed to Kirsty's perceptions of how best to support cultural wellbeing.

8.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I employed the typology of cultural wellbeing to explore a range of cultural locations and to discuss how these might have influenced educators'

perceptions of cultural wellbeing and how they support it. This provided insights into the diverse ways educators interpret cultural wellbeing and the practices they engage in, while also revealing the influences of the cultural locations of their students. The *school cultures* experienced by Dan and Ryan and described in Section 8.1 are characterised by their positioning within the dominant culture, an abundance of opportunity, and a lack of barriers to student success. In this context, Dan and Ryan's perceptions of cultural wellbeing are concerned with helping their students make the most opportune life choices from a selection of privileged options. Their cultural location largely excludes them from the challenges of disadvantage and uncertainty, and they perceive that cultural wellbeing is primarily concerned with how to help their students take best advantage of their good fortune.

Section 8.2 examined the perceptions of Aboriginal educator Valerie and non-Indigenous educator Kathryn, whose Aboriginal students are part of a non-dominant cultural group which they perceive is misrecognised in contemporary schooling. Their pursuit of recognitive justice for their students is part of an ongoing struggle against cultural inequality, which continues in education. These educators perceive cultural wellbeing involves students recognising and embracing their Aboriginality, and their cultural needs being recognised and valued by the education system. Valerie and Kathryn perceive that their students' future trajectories and life choices are constrained by the significant limitations and institutionalised inequality of their cultural location, and that their students' cultural wellbeing is best supported by increasing connections with Aboriginal people, practices and country.

Finally, in Section 8.3 arts educator Kirsty spoke of using *cultural production* to support the interactions and relationality of people with diverse abilities and perspectives. Through arts structures, Kirsty enabled students to engage safely in

community conversations despite the presence of oppositional viewpoints. The cultural locations of students in the classroom community differed widely and, in this context, Kirsty perceived that arts participation and production afforded opportunities for supporting cultural wellbeing.

Themes of neoliberalism, historical injustices and inclusion were surfaced in educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing through the discussion presented in this chapter. Educators' accounts afforded insights into power relations and histories as aspects of culture that enter into the meanings people make of cultural wellbeing. The discussion focused on themes of school culture, recognition and cultural production, which form the typology of cultural wellbeing. Through the complex insights offered by educators, the interactions of these cultural components appeared as mutually reinforcing aspects of the school ecosystem. The meanings participants made of cultural wellbeing were multiple, situated and reflect the ongoing fluidity and change in meanings of culture.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Memo: January 20, 2018

The “stone in my shoe” throughout this study has been this question: what does this often invisible and almost incomprehensible thing we call “culture” – in its many different interpretations – have to do with wellbeing? I began an inquiry into this question by making use of a concept called “cultural wellbeing”. This was just one of many possible ways of entering into this perplexing question. It was on my mind throughout the study that some participants might reject the idea of cultural wellbeing, that they might tell me the concept was of no relevance to their teaching. Yet none rejected it and every one of them was able to make some meaning of the term. This was reassuring because I had hoped that cultural wellbeing would be a concept people would be able to relate to since humans are, after all, cultural beings.

During conversations with academic colleagues, some have sought to pin down a fixed location for the concept of cultural wellbeing. I’ve been asked if I perceive cultural wellbeing to be one dimension of a wellbeing model, like social, physical or emotional wellbeing, or if I see this as an overarching model of wellbeing that all other dimensions sit within. My response has been that I see cultural wellbeing as neither of those things. One of the criticisms of frameworks of wellbeing surfaced during the literature reviewing phase is their tendency to artificially divide wellbeing into definable fragments. This study has sought to explore cultural wellbeing in ways that retained the complexity and wholeness of the concept.

I see cultural wellbeing as something other, something undefined and something fluid. Perhaps it has become (for me anyway) a concept that can operate like a third space, a space of thought’s freedom (Horowitz,

1995). In this study it appeared that the concept of cultural wellbeing offered educators a space to think about their philosophies and practices of teaching.

The above memo reveals that a central focus throughout this study has been to open up space for educators to think about and speak into wellbeing discourses. Through inviting educators to consider their teaching practice in relation to their ideas of cultural wellbeing, I hoped to create a thinking space away from the accountability logics that Hardy and Lewis (2017) say are dominating schooling practices. Nevertheless, the dominance of accountability logics was evident in the interviews with numerous educators, most notably prep teacher Lauren who critiqued the contemporary conditions of the schooling system. She explained that after more than twelve years' experience she now felt like she was "not a teacher" but rather, "an assessor and data collector":

They talk about teacher accountability and that's all based on data...

You know we're called in for data conversations to explain why the data in my classroom is looking like this. And the end of year data.

"Why do you have children who have not moved off a level 0 reading text? Why do you have that number of children who do not have 40 sight words? Why is this?" But nobody ever asked me about how many children in my class love coming to school every day, or how many children in my class feel nurtured or... how many children in my class are happy every day that they come to school and talk to me about what happens in their lives. Nobody ever asks me about that stuff ever.

(Lauren)

Lauren lamented that her school leadership focuses intensely on the metrics that feature in measurement and accountability discourses, while little attention is paid to cultural wellbeing, or the sense of belonging and connectedness students experience in her classroom. Lauren's frustration with the dominance of accountability logics in her teaching situation is evident. In this concluding chapter I articulate the contributions my research makes to the field of schooling, discuss implications of the study and present opportunities for further research.

9.1 Contributions of the research

This research makes two contributions to the fields of schooling and wellbeing research. First, it extends understandings of cultural wellbeing, embracing diverse interpretations of this relatively new concept in the field of schooling. Second, this study contributes to methodological innovation in the field of schooling research. I address first the substantive contribution of the research to understandings of cultural wellbeing, by answering the three research questions that formed the basis of the study. After synthesising the findings, I address the methodological contribution that the study makes.

9.1.1 Answering the Research Questions

I focused the study around three research questions which I restate here with an overview of the key outcomes of the research. The contribution of this study is made through both the findings and the formation of the typology of cultural wellbeing.

Research question 1: What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?

Educators constructed varied meanings of cultural wellbeing which were informed by multiple interpretations of culture. Three prominent interpretations of culture were evident in the educators' accounts and became the basis for a typology of culture which I used as a frame of reference for the term "culture" throughout the research. The three interpretations of culture related to:

- Culture as the ways of life around here;
- Culture as how we recognise and identify as human beings; and
- Culture as cultural production and expression.

I present here a working interpretation of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities, using the analysis of educators' perceptions of the concept. I interpret cultural wellbeing as *the positive benefits generated in classroom communities through participation in the school culture, the recognition of classroom community members, and the cultural production of classroom community life.*

Cultural wellbeing was perceived by all the educators in this study as a *generative* and *positive* concept concerned with achieving beneficial outcomes in their classroom communities. Each account of the practices engaged by these educators was depicted as working towards positive cultural wellbeing. There is insufficient evidence in the data to formulate findings of *negative cultural wellbeing*, therefore consideration of negative cultural wellbeing is unaddressed by this research. There may be merit in further exploring cultural wellbeing as a concept on a scale or spectrum from negative to positive.

Educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing were revealed to be socially and culturally located. School socio-economic status appeared to influence the ways in which educators perceived cultural wellbeing and their capacities for supporting cultural wellbeing in their classroom communities. The findings also indicated the presence of cultural inequalities in educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing. These included the dominance of hegemonic perspectives within educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing and the marginalising of non-dominant cultural perspectives within schooling and school structures.

Further, the findings revealed that "the realities" of young people's lives were a salient aspect of educators' views of cultural wellbeing. Educators revealed that young people are often required to navigate complex challenges to their wellbeing while proceeding through their school lives. These included unmet basic human needs in the most disadvantaged communities, and complex personal and social challenges across all demographics. Also present were accounts of the lived experiences of young people of privileged upbringings, from which they bring significant social and cultural capitals that can both *assure* their future success and carry the weight of significant *expectations* of future success. Across all social locations there were accounts of young people experiencing social pressures and school pressures. Educators' perceived that their role in supporting cultural wellbeing was about guiding students from their current situations, wherever that may be, to better situations.

Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

Educators perceived that supporting cultural wellbeing involves connecting students with enriching curricular and pedagogical experiences of *people, places and*

cultures. They described supporting such connections by employing experiential pedagogies, including, but not limited to, place-based pedagogies, play-based learning, inquiry learning and arts rich learning. Chelsea, for example, leveraged off her school's culture by exercising the freedom she enjoyed to employ her nature kindergarten program. She engaged children in learning by utilising the school community's outdoor spaces, including the outdoor spaces within the school and the wider community.

Recognition was key to Valerie's support of cultural wellbeing for Aboriginal students. When able to do so, Valerie provided opportunities for students to engage in contemporary and traditional Aboriginal arts practices. Through such practices, educators employed culture as a resource for benefitting students' wellbeing in multiple ways, drawing on multiple interpretations of culture and cultural wellbeing.

Additionally, educators indicated they supported cultural wellbeing through enabling student participation with the wider school community. This was exemplified by Charles and Stella's billy cart program, which brought students, educators, parents and other community members together in a shared cultural production. These types of experiences were perceived by educators to be important for fostering a sense of *connection and belonging*, which they associated with cultural wellbeing.

Deeper analysis of educators' accounts gave insights into contemporary *systemic and structural* aspects of classroom communities which had consequences for how educators support cultural wellbeing. The working interpretation of cultural wellbeing acknowledges that classroom communities are part of broader social and structural systems that reproduce social inequalities by disadvantaging some students

while privileging others. Further, there were tensions between and amongst educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing which raised questions about cultural inequality and whose culture matters in discourses of cultural wellbeing. Through these findings, this study revealed differences in access to cultural capital that educators had in their social locations. These differences related to material and financial school resources as well as the legitimacy and autonomy granted to educators to exercise their professional judgement in supporting cultural wellbeing in classroom communities.

Some educators (notably those in low SES locations) reported being constrained from supporting cultural wellbeing. Constraints that educators mentioned included the limited time made available for engaging students in experiential learning, and limitations to the pedagogies that educators could legitimately employ in their teaching. These constraints were mentioned by educators in low SES locations, however they were less evident in the accounts of educators in high SES locations. The educators who reported these constraints indicated they were largely connected with preparing students for compulsory numeracy and literacy assessment. They indicated that the performative pressure of high stakes testing in Australian schooling (particularly preparation for NAPLAN) hampered their efforts to engage students in broadened curricular and pedagogical experiences.

When educators were denied the autonomy to exercise their professional judgement in these ways, they described experiencing inner conflict between what they perceived were ways of teaching which supported cultural wellbeing and the prescribed practices of teaching they were required to implement. In this way, some educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing revealed competing discourses where their own professional values and judgement came into conflict with dominant accountability logics in schooling.

To summarise, educators perceived that cultural wellbeing has an affective quality, and involves healthy connections and relationships. The various interpretations of cultural wellbeing appeared to be influenced by participants' own circumstances and their social and cultural locations. It was also evident that the ways in which educators supported cultural wellbeing were influenced by the social, cultural and economic capitals available to them.

Research question 3: What might a typology of cultural wellbeing look like?

In Chapter 7 I proposed a typology which depicted cultural wellbeing as generated by the relationality and interactions between the school culture, recognition of the people in classroom communities, and their participation in the cultural production of schooling. The typology represents three different processes that work together and separately in the educator's arena of practice to generate cultural wellbeing benefits. It draws on the ecological model described by Bronfenbrenner (1995), with the three Types considering multiple layers of the ecological system in the interactions of classroom communities. The typology of cultural wellbeing suggests the dynamic interaction of these three Types, which might be thought of as pathways towards wellbeing.

Critical research is concerned with power relations and social justice issues of inequities in education along class, gender and race lines (Apple, 2012). In proposing a typology of cultural wellbeing, this study offers a new analytic frame for focusing on these and other cultural aspects in undertaking critical analysis of wellbeing in research. The typology of cultural wellbeing provided a tool for discussing the findings along the analytic lines of school culture, recognition of students, and participation in cultural production within schooling. The typology of cultural wellbeing helped interrogate the impacts of power relations and neoliberal school

reform agendas on classroom communities within educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing. The typology emerges from an exploratory study and the potential exists for it to be usefully critiqued and extended through further research.

9.1.2 Articulating an emergent grounded theory approach

This study makes a methodological contribution through the emergent grounded theory approach developed over the course of the study. Combining constructivist grounded theory with situational analysis is a relatively new approach in education research in Australia. This methodological combination has become established in the field of health research, particularly through the work of Birks and Mills (2015) and previously, Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006), however it has not been widely employed in education research. This emergent grounded theory approach was productive for exploring understandings of the complex concept of cultural wellbeing. The context for this study was classroom communities, however this methodology may be extended to other contexts and concepts when seeking locally meaningful and situated interpretations.

In seeking an alternative beyond constructivist grounded theory's pursuit of a basic social process, I employed selected aspects of situational analysis which employed mapping techniques to render visible the complexity of educators' perspectives. The situational analysis brought many aspects of educators' worlds together, including micro-meso-macro level aspects. This was important for interrogating the educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing and seeking to understand how they create conditions for cultural wellbeing in their classroom communities. I further progressed this methodological combination by developing a typology of cultural wellbeing

which made explicit the three prevalent interpretations of cultural wellbeing arising from the data analysis.

The topic, cultural wellbeing, accommodated diverse interpretations and enabled educators to bring the circumstances of their classroom communities to the forefront of a study about wellbeing in schools. While other models or frameworks of wellbeing in education interpret wellbeing through pre-established dimensions, this study of cultural wellbeing, through its constructivist grounded theory methodology, enabled educators to interpret the concept of cultural wellbeing in the ways they found relevant and meaningful. This approach created a space in which educators' perspectives were valued and foregrounded.

In reviewing the contributions of this research, it is also important to consider its parameters and limitations. It was necessary to be circumspect about the level of detail to include about participants' backgrounds in order to preserve their confidentiality and anonymity in keeping with the ethical conditions for the study. Accordingly, the thesis includes a limited set of details relating to the research participants, such as their teaching area and their school socioeconomic context. This decision limited the articulation of how participants' *personal backgrounds* influenced their perceptions and practices relating to cultural wellbeing.

This study begins to reveal how educators' perspectives of cultural wellbeing are embedded in social, cultural and interactional contexts. It remains opportune to ask what influence does an educator's historical background and their own experiences of schooling have on how they make meaning of cultural wellbeing and how they support cultural wellbeing in their classroom communities? Future research may seek to address such questions, enabling further exploration of the inter-

relationships between layers of the school ecosystem. The next section outlines other research opportunities that extend from the present study of cultural wellbeing in classroom communities.

9.2 Implications and opportunities for further research

Most educators in this study perceived their work of teaching was intrinsically connected with supporting students' cultural wellbeing, requiring them to respond to the particular needs and potentials of their students, and the local conditions of their classroom communities. However, through their accounts some educators revealed that their capacities for supporting cultural wellbeing were constrained by the education system, particularly by the accountability demands of preparing students for high stakes testing. The findings of this study raise concerns about the wellbeing impacts of national standardised assessment, particularly the reports from educators in low SES schools of accountability demands limiting their capacities to support cultural wellbeing. This situation warrants further investigation to better understand how high stakes testing regimes impact upon cultural wellbeing and to suggest appropriate responses that are in students' best interests.

A typology of cultural wellbeing is one of the outputs of this study developed through the theorising process. The opportunity exists for this tentative typology to continue to be developed through further research on the topic of cultural wellbeing. Future studies might, for example, seek to access students' perspectives of cultural wellbeing. This has begun with recent research of cultural wellbeing amongst postgraduate students within a university setting (Emery, Pavlyshyn, Hedayati, & Nur, 2016). A small but growing body of research partnerships between researchers

and educators demonstrates the flexible applications of the concept of cultural wellbeing. For example, Emery and Shearer (2015) explored cultural wellbeing in a Year 9/10 humanities class, while a primary school cultural arts program was the focus of another case study of cultural wellbeing conducted by Emery, Miller, West and Nailon (2015). Future research might productively explore how the concept of cultural wellbeing is interpreted in other settings by further developing the typology of cultural wellbeing for use by researchers and educators in empirical observations.

Ideas shared by educators suggested that the growth and provocation of learning might be a process that is intrinsically supportive of cultural wellbeing, and that in turn, supporting cultural wellbeing might support learning processes. Research opportunities arising from this study include developing better understandings of connections between learning and cultural wellbeing.

This study reported encouraging findings about the cultural wellbeing benefits of experiential pedagogies, such as arts rich pedagogies and outdoor education. It must be noted however that such experiential pedagogies are becoming marginalised in educators' curriculum enactment in a time of increasing teacher accountability (Hardy, 2016). Hunter and colleagues (2018, p. 3) argue that enriching arts experiences "operate on the margins of conventional pedagogy and curriculum, yet we know they have more than marginal impact". Future studies might examine the impacts of experiential pedagogies on cultural wellbeing to understand their benefits more fully.

Considering educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing in the context of schooling reveals the many ways that schools continue to reproduce social and cultural inequalities. As this study showed, this occurs through the unequal access to

forms of capital that educators in high and low socio-economic locations have for supporting students' cultural wellbeing. Inequalities are also reproduced through the reinscribing of dominant mainstream culture within schools. Schooling in Australia is concerned with broad goals of increasing equity and this thesis troubles school cultures, the ways that students are unequally recognised in schooling and the generative possibilities of cultural participation and production. This thesis offers insights into how educators' social and cultural locations influence their perceptions of cultural wellbeing and how they perceive they support cultural wellbeing in their classroom communities. These insights may inform strategic approaches for supporting cultural wellbeing in improving the quality of schooling to support *all children* reaching their full potential.

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Appendix A

Values and ethics: Guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research

Appendix 1: Ethics application Section 10(g) - Statement regarding researching with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

My name is Sherridan Emery and I am a recently enrolled PhD candidate in the UTas Faculty of Education who lives in Launceston. The area I seek to research is children's cultural wellbeing in education. One of the school communities I seek to conduct research with is the [de-identified] program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at [de-identified] School. The NHMRC document *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research* ("Guidelines") outlines the values that are central to ethical conduct of research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and this statement represents my response to those guidelines.

The guidelines emphasise the building of relationships through trust and recognition of intercultural differences in values and cultures when conducting research. "Working with difference in a research context takes time, care, patience and the building of robust relationships... Where trust persists, research can be sustained." (p. 3).

I make the commitment to consult respectfully with members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community in developing this research so that it will advance the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Guidelines section 2.2.2). I will endeavour to treat all partners in this research as equal, notwithstanding that we are all different. My partners include students and teachers in the classroom communities, school leaders, elders and members of the communities involved in the classrooms I work with. It is my intention that the benefits of this research should be shared equitably amongst the partners. To this end, I will observe the requirements of the *National Statement sections 1.5 and 1.6* relating to beneficence which require that research outcomes are made accessible to research participants in a timely and clear way and that the research benefits outweigh the risks (Guidelines section 2.2.2).

Poor consultation and lack of communication is identified in the Values and Ethics document as creating ongoing concerns for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Guidelines, p. 4). In seeking to be respectful, transparent and embracing the ideas and intentions of members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, I have consulted with Elders about this research project since before it commenced. Accordingly, I believe that in many ways, the project has been shaped by parts of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. Prior to applying for entry into the UTas PhD program I met with [de-identified] UTas Elder in Residence]. We talked about the research I hoped to do looking at children's wellbeing in education and how education systems can better recognise and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's wellbeing. This was an area that [de-identified] was interested in too. At our first meeting she told me she wanted to see Aboriginal children engaged in their learning and proud of their culture. When I mentioned that my research would involve case studies, [de-identified] suggested that a worthwhile case study may be the [de-identified] program at [de-identified] School where Aboriginal artist [de-identified name] shares culture with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. I have previously had the pleasure of working with [de-identified] when she led a teacher professional learning workshop for a UTas event I organised in 2013. I have great respect for [de-identified] and am very keen to work once again with her in the hope that documenting her work with a classroom community can provide a model that can be shared with other educators working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

[de-identified] School's [de-identified] program was featured at the recent [de-identified] conference, and I took the opportunity to ask [de-identified] and [de-identified] (the school teacher responsible for the program) if they would be interested in participating in my research into cultural wellbeing. They expressed enthusiasm which was also shared by the Assistant Principal from the school who was in attendance. I believe that the

learning space created together by [de-identified], teacher [de-identified], the students and the community they create may reveal important knowledge about students' sense of cultural wellbeing.

The guidelines indicate that researchers should consider the implications of cultural difference in the conduct of the research (p. 4). In reflecting upon my approach to research I became aware of the importance of gaining exposure to Indigenous research methodologies and epistemologies (Moreton-Robinson and Walter, 2009, part 5, p. 1). Through the writings of Aboriginal researchers Aileen Moreton-Robinson and Maggie Walter, I understand the importance of consulting with the classroom community participants (teachers, students and community members) who are involved in the learning experience about the research methods employed. For this reason my ethics application encompasses many different methods of documentation, in order that the classroom community is able to choose methods that suit their preferences.

According to the values of reciprocity in the guidelines, the researcher is required to recognise partners' contributions, and ensure that research demonstrates the intention to contribute to the advancement of the health and wellbeing of participants and communities (Guidelines section 2.2.1). I believe that my study could contribute to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples because its findings may lead to recommendations for education systems to explicitly recognise and support children's cultural wellbeing which aligns with the intention of the guidelines (p. 5).

The potential impact of such a study is that it provides evidence that supports change within the education system towards recognising the important place that culture and cultural wellbeing plays in engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in education. Strong support for quality education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has been conveyed in the interactions I've had with Elders in the north of Tasmania including [de-identified] (UTas Elder in Residence) and [de-identified] and in learning sessions I've attended including Aboriginal Education Day at Riawunna and Aboriginal cultural education workshops led by [de-identified], [de-identified] and [de-identified]. The importance of quality education for Aboriginal children was also emphasised in the Indigenous Cultures Open2Learn course I undertook led by [de-identified]. These conversations give me confidence that advocating for educational systems to support the cultural wellbeing of children is a worthwhile study and may benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

I understand that I can never 'know' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, but I have a great respect for the spirit and integrity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and cultures. I hope that my ongoing learning can help make way in the education system for children's cultural wellbeing to be valued and supported throughout their education. Importantly this includes helping to strengthen children's connections to their family, community and cultures.

Yours sincerely,


Sheridan Emery

References:

- Moreton-Robinson, A. M., & Walter, M. (2009) Indigenous methodologies in social research. In M. Walter (Ed.) *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press, Australia, pp. 1-18.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2007– updated May 2013). *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. The National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Research Council and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
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Appendix B

Participant information sheet

<p>Private Bag 1307 Launceston Tasmania 7250 Australia Phone (03) 6324 3265 Fax (03) 6324 3048 www.utas.edu.au</p> <p>SCHOOL OF EDUCATION</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">EDUCATOR'S INFORMATION SHEET</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Researching cultural wellbeing in classroom communities</p> <p>Hi, my name is Sherridan Emery and I am a researcher at the University of Tasmania researching cultural wellbeing in education. I'd like to invite you to participate in a research study I am doing for my PhD.</p> <p>What is the purpose of this study? The purpose of this study is to investigate cultural wellbeing in classroom communities.</p> <p>Why have I been invited to participate? As an educator, your reflective feedback on cultural wellbeing in education and the strategies you employ in supporting cultural wellbeing in your own educational context can provide insights that are important to the development of the field of education.</p> <p>Please note that your involvement in this research is voluntary, and there are no consequences if you decide not to participate. If you choose to not participate, this will not affect your relationship with the University of Tasmania.</p> <p>What will I be asked to do? You are invited to participate in an interview in which the researcher will visit you at your workplace or a convenient place of your choosing at a pre-agreed time. The interview will be voice recorded and will last approximately thirty minutes or less. The researcher will offer any support necessary to answer the open-ended questions, for example by clarifying questions where necessary.</p> <p>Your signature on the consent form that will be provided to you will show that you consent to participating in the research and for the researcher to publish data from the research in ways that don't identify you. This will be done through use of pseudonyms.</p> <p>Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study? It is anticipated that participation in the project may assist you to develop your understandings of and approaches to cultural wellbeing in education.</p>	

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

There are no foreseeable risks associated with the study. During the interview you can decline to answer any or all questions or ask that the interview cease at any time without explanation or consequences.

What will happen to my information?

Your data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office. Names and other identifying information will be removed from the interview transcripts and data will be kept in a password protected computer. If you choose to withdraw from the study the researcher will locate and delete your data from the analysis. In addition, you will have the opportunity to amend responses to the interviews by contacting the researcher before 1 September, 2017. Five years after publication of the report of the project all transcripts and field notes will be shredded, computer files deleted and photographic images, video recordings and audio files deleted. All information collected will be treated confidentially.

What if I have questions about this study?


If you have questions relating to this study, please contact the researcher:

Sherridan Emery Ph: 04..... Email: sherridan.emery@utas.edu.au

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number [H0014275].

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

Participant consent form

<p>Private Bag 1307 Launceston Tasmania 7250 Australia Phone (03) 6324 3265 Fax (03) 6324 3048 www.utas.edu.au</p>	
<p>SCHOOL OF EDUCATION</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">EDUCATOR'S CONSENT FORM Researching cultural wellbeing in classroom communities</p> <p>1. I have read and understood the 'Information Sheet' for this project.</p> <p>2. The nature and the possible effects of the project have been explained to me.</p> <p>3. I understand that this study may involve my participation in an audio-recorded interview with the researcher of up to forty minutes duration. The interview will be at my discretion and convenience. I understand that I can choose to decline to be interviewed.</p> <p>4. I understand that participation in this research project involves only low risk.</p> <p>5. I understand that all research data will be securely stored by the researcher and will be destroyed five years following publication of the results.</p> <p>6. I agree to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without any explanation and I can request that any data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research up until 1 September 2017.</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Statement by the investigator:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided. The participant has had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participation in this project.</p> <p>Investigator's name: Mary Ann Hunter Signature: _____ Date: 18/6/15</p>	

Appendix C

Interview schedule

Cultural wellbeing interview v. 5
27/02/2015

Sherridan Emery

Interview Guide for teachers/teacher educators

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

1. Could you tell me a little about your classroom teaching context
2. What does the expression **student wellbeing** mean to you? How do you understand that term?
3. The term **cultural wellbeing** is starting to appear in educational policy documents. I wondered what this idea of cultural wellbeing means to you?
 - a. Can you tell me the first five words you think of when you hear the expression “wellbeing”
 - b. And the first five words you think of when you hear the expression “cultural wellbeing”
4. How do you think you promote cultural wellbeing in your classroom? *[if necessary, broaden this by asking and what if you worked in a different school in another place?]*
5. If I was to come and do an observation in your classroom, what should I be looking for if I wanted to see cultural wellbeing occurring?
6. What sorts of factors do you think prevent cultural wellbeing from occurring?
7. How do you think the inclusion of wellbeing goals in the teaching standards has influenced your practice in the classroom if at all?
8. Thinking about your teaching practice, what are your biggest *concerns* in regard to addressing cultural wellbeing?
9. What do you believe might be your *strengths* in regard to integrating cultural wellbeing into your teaching practice?
10. What professional learning would be helpful for you to more effectively integrate cultural wellbeing in your teaching practice?
11. We have talked for a while about cultural wellbeing today so I’d like to return briefly to your earlier thoughts about cultural wellbeing and ask if there’s anything additional you wanted to add about what that term means to you?

Various interpretations of terms used in the research:

Culture

There are many broad definitions of culture – for example, culture as it relates to cultural diversity or ethnicity, disability culture, deaf culture, culture in relation to the arts, and culture as being about shared social meaning, or the various ways we make sense of the world. Do any of these ideas resonate for you in your definition?

Wellbeing

Wellbeing too has a range of different definitions. One interpretation is that it has been defined as “a complex physical and psychological state. It includes good physical health and feelings of happiness, satisfaction and social functioning and is demonstrated through one’s interactions in the environment” (Mayr & Ulich, 1999).

Appendix D

Interview transcripts

(*pseudonyms have been used; Sherridan's voice is in *italics*, Educators' voices are in plain text).

Transcript: Interview with Lauren, Prep teacher

Interview date: 25 June 2016

Lauren is a prep teacher in a low SES state public school. First, I include some notes made during an initial conversation with Lauren, from which we arranged a later phone interview.

Notes from phone conversation between Sherridan and Lauren

"I basically teach in a way that is directly opposite to the way I would teach if I was teaching in alignment with my beliefs" commented Lauren.

When I asked what she would do differently if she could Lauren said, "I would have an almost totally play based curriculum for the prep year. We do almost no play-based learning currently. It's all sitting at desks learning the basics of reading, writing and numeracy."

Asked why she taught this way when it ran contrary to her beliefs about what's best for prep-aged students Lauren replied "Because of the amount of student data reporting on numeracy and literacy we have to do. It's just data, data, data. What we then get as a consequence in the classroom is a whole lot of challenging behaviour from children who aren't ready for this kind of learning. It's enough to make me want to leave teaching. There's a whole lot of teachers who feel the frustration I feel about the unrelenting emphasis on data. It's not good for young children." (Lauren)

Somewhere in here I asked is there much room for play. Lauren replied there wasn't, saying "it's getting hard to justify it at least in the state system."

Sherridan: "Justify it to whom?"

Lauren: "To the school administration, and the state (education) system."

Sherridan: "what about the parents?"

Lauren: "No there's no pressure from the parents for all this data and assessment. I don't think parents want that. They want more play. I think they see that as healthy for their children rather than constantly doing academic work at their desks."

This above conversation occurred during a conversation when we were planning to set up a phone interview which is why the notes are written from memory. The transcript from the interview which took place a couple of weeks later appears below.

***Lauren Interview transcript**

18 August 2016. 7pm.

Note: We had rescheduled the interview from the night before due to an unexpected appointment coming up for me. The conversation opening refers back to the conversation of the night before around expected time of getting home from work (which seemed late for a teacher from my perspective). I've included this preamble to

the interview because I believe it is relevant to consider the work conditions in which educators support cultural wellbeing.

Did you end up getting home before 6.30 last night?

Yes I actually got home around 5.45 which was lovely.

They're long work days for you aren't they?

They are long days. Especially since I get to work at 7.

That's five days a week? You're in at 7am?

I frequently have meetings at 8am. So if I don't get in at 7 I don't get an opportunity to set my classroom up for the day and do what I need to. So I really like to be a bit organised. There are odd days where I go and do things on the fly, and generally, just because of the nature of my class at the moment, it doesn't bode well.

So they are the days you end up paying the price?

Yeah, so it's just better for all really if I'm thoroughly organised and have everything under control.

Is it better for your personal life and better for you personally?

No, not ultimately. I end up very tired. Running on empty a little bit is what ends up happening. And by the end of term, really looking forward to that break.

So a full-time job working 7am until 6pm. How does it feel when you hear people say oh teachers, great job - 9 to 3 right?

Yeah irritated I guess. It bothers me now more than it used to. It didn't used to bother me at all. And I'm not sure why that is. So probably five years ago it never really bothered me what people thought or said and it does irritate me now a little bit when I hear that, just because I know how much time I actually do invest in this job. And I think too for me it probably has come at a bit of a personal cost, because I think that I've got a child, you know *Sally struggles herself enormously with school. And I think over the duration of the, gosh how long, 12 years of teaching, how much time I've devoted to children who are not my own, that I could have been devoting to her. And ultimately has that been to her detriment? So I think that's why it does irritate me now. Because I do question that now, whereas I didn't used to question it. Her learning needs weren't quite as obvious to me then, and they are now.

This is a study about an idea of cultural wellbeing. I just wanted to ask you first of all what does cultural wellbeing mean to you?

I guess for me, it probably means it's ensuring the wellbeing of all students in my classroom, but ensuring that children and their families, probably through an understanding of their culture, are being well supported in my classroom and in my school environment. So it's understanding their language, their customs, behaviours, beliefs, their cultural backgrounds and how that contributes to their emotional and mental wellbeing.

Wow that's comprehensive. Is this something that you have thought about before, or is it just as the expression comes to you?

No it's definitely something that I've thought about, and it has to be that way, because of the nature of my setting. I work in a school that obviously is multiculturally

diverse, and it's been that way for a long time, so it's in my best interest as a prep teacher, and definitely as a prep teacher because that's the entry point for these children and families into our school, to do the best I can to promote mutual respect between the school and families. So doing everything that I possibly can to support cultural wellbeing has always been really important, particularly at the school I'm in at the moment.

Do you say particularly at this school as opposed to other schools where you've worked?

Definitely. I've worked at other schools where the make-up of my class was largely of people just like me, so English-speaking Australian children. That's not necessarily the case in my classes now, well it's definitely not the case. So I believe that my class is a richer place if I can understand everybody's cultural diversity, and you know their cultural background.

I like your choice of words there that your classroom is richer place [Yeah] how does that look in practice? What makes it richer? How is it richer?

I think meaningful conversations with children and their families. I think it's about inviting families into my setting.

Do you do that?

Yeah definitely and treating them as the expert because I'm not an expert. Inviting parents and families and grandparents in to share their experiences from home, to share their knowledge of the arts, to share anything they're willing to share is a great thing to do in a prep class.

How do you get to that point with families that you are welcoming in, how would you start that conversation?

I guess that starts with individual interviews with parents, early on in the year doing welcoming interviews. Sitting down and having conversations with parents about the children and asking questions about their families and whether they have anything that they would be willing to share. You have to ask the question, really they need to be asked. And it's doing that quite early on in the year that's really important or early after a child is enrolled.

Why is it important to do it so early?

So that they know you're invested in their child. So they know that child is really important to you. And they are, these little cherubs are really important to me. So I think their families need to know that as well.

Are any of the families surprised about that or is it standard for them to be invited in?

I guess it probably is surprising for some of them. For some of them no because they have had experiences in settings prior to prep, and they're familiar with having to sit or going in to sit with the teacher and speak about their children. For some families I think it is a bit of a hurdle to overcome. I can definitely see that some parents are uncomfortable about coming in and talking to me and it's not something they are used to. I certainly have children in my class who haven't had any prior experience in a formal education setting or care setting prior to coming to prep. For those people I guess it's a larger hurdle to overcome.

In some of the interviews I've had, educators have sometimes spoken about parents having had negative relationships with school, so the idea of being called in to come in is not a comfortable thing. Does that resonate with your experience?

Definitely. I have to say I've probably encountered that more with men, feeling uncomfortable about coming in and talk to me in that setting. I have had fathers say to me it's been a long time since I've been in a primary school and I don't have fond memories.

Really? That's something interesting that hasn't come through before, that sort of gendered nature around men being willing to engage with children in school. When you said you invite families in to do something in the class, does gender come through here too, would you find ways to involve the men?

I find probably more than gender is the fact that quite frequently the men are working. So quite frequently it's mums who come in, or grandmothers or grandfathers who come in, we get grandfathers as well. But frequently fathers of children in my class are working, which changes that. So I guess they're not represented as often, and that's probably largely the reason why.

I want to ask a hypothetical question if I was to come in to do an observation in your classroom what would you think I should be looking for if I was wanting to see cultural wellbeing the way that you are thinking about it?

You would see happy engaged children, you would see me questioning children in a way or conversing with children in a way that is comfortable for them and it's not the same for all children. So some children enjoy and are comfortable with me getting right down at their level and making eye contact with them. They're comfortable with me putting a hand on their shoulder. Some children are not at all comfortable with that, and they're not at all comfortable making eye contact with me. It's knowing that stuff about children and knowing that that's the way they engage, that you would probably observe. You would see evidence of children's families around my classroom, so you know, photographs of families. You'd see evidence of what children are doing outside of school with families, so show and tell tables, drawings that children have done from home and brought in to share with me about their families. You would see that sort of evidence as well.

What I hear there is what you were saying before that you value the home lives of children and what funds of knowledge they're bringing in to the classroom. I'm hearing a fairly fluid boundary between families and the school classroom.

Yes, I think ultimately I would hope that's the way it is in many classrooms in my school. I'm not sure that it actually is. But certainly in prep classrooms, I really think that's where it starts the relationship building with families in our community for our schools so every effort has to be made to welcome everybody into that setting.

Something that has stayed with me from our former conversation, we got to talking about play based learning, and I remember you saying you would deliver so much of your curriculum through play based learning if you could and I said, sort of naively I guess, what prevents you doing that? I want to ask you a question, would play based learning figure into your thinking about cultural wellbeing?

Definitely. Definitely. I just think, you know we're dealing with five-year-olds. We're actually dealing with four year olds and five year olds, and play is their day, play is the way they learn, play is the way they express who they are. And as an expression of who they are, their culture is everything. Play to me is the driver for how a child expresses themselves in that setting. And I feel honestly, honestly I can say to you that every single day is a conflict for me currently because I feel like I can't engage children in play the way I would like to. And there are lots of reasons for that. [mm] It's definitely not what has been the push in the school that I'm currently in in terms of curriculum delivery. In fact it's probably been ousted.

Wait there, tell me what you mean, what has not been the push?

Play-based learning - play in in any form in fact in a prep setting has kind of been ousted.

Why? How? What by?

I actually have been called at times to explain why I am playing inside a prep classroom. [Voiced in administrative voice] Why when I walked in here, [repeats for effect] why when I walked in here, why are these children playing?

What?

Yes, yeah.

And that's by the school administration basically?

Yes, yep.

So what do they expect to see when they walk in there?

They expect to be seeing children sitting at desks I believe.

Doing what?

Doing handwriting probably [laughs wearily]. And you know, maths looking at a board. Yes. There have been - I have had very passionate heated, [um] open and honest conversations with administration, with heads of curriculum, with deputy principals, with principals about why I believe play based learning should be the way that we are going for children. And they, you know, they nod sometimes, [pauses] nod their heads, and then say 'yes but that's not our agenda here'.

And what is their agenda?

[Um] I think their agenda is achieving you know, optimum results on NAPLAN in year three, and if I'm drumming sight words into their five-year-olds then perhaps they've got a better chance of achieving, you know, acceptable data when it comes to year 3. I believe that's what the agenda is.

So the other day when we were talking, the words I took home with me were 'it's all data, data data'

mmm I feel like, I feel like, more than a tea... well not a teacher some days. What I feel like is an assessor and data collector. That's what I feel like. And I feel like there are days when that conflicts me so greatly, and I feel like that occurs to the detriment of relationship building with children in my classroom. And I actually would probably say that that happens on a daily basis, where I feel like you know that time that I just spent doing that piece of assessment and collecting the data that I probably will never look at again would just have been much better spent [laughs] if we were engaged in a really meaningful play-based learning environment. I would still be assessing children, I would still be observing children, but it would happen in a completely different way.

So the assessments that you have to do, are they particularly prescribed in certain ways so that you need to deliver the data in particular forms?

Yeah because we then have to sit down and have year level moderation where we're presenting [laughs wearily], where we're presenting work samples of the same piece of assessment for 100 prep children and comparing them, and yeah. And some days, um,...[pauses]

It sounds like... I don't mean to be disparaging but...

Do I sound defeated?

Do you feel defeated?

I feel defeated. I feel defeated. I went into prep perhaps a little foolishly believing that [um] because I went into prep at my school having come down from teaching in a year one setting, and previous to that in year 3 and 4, and I went into my placement in prep at that same school kind of knowing that play was not a focus at our school. I went in there championing the cause and I really, really wanted to lead that change. And probably my first year of prep was when I had the most torturous conversations and I felt like I was pleading my case all the time and when you do that year after year after year and you just meet brick walls, you become defeated.

Understandably so. Obviously your practice as a prep teacher comes under both the EYLF and the curriculum. [Yes]. You can't simply show the EYLF and say it's in the Framework, it's in the National Quality Standard, play is important and is valuable. Is that not good enough? Does that not stand up to the demand for the data?

No it doesn't (*so you get the smiles and the nods but then you get...*) you get redirected to the point where last year I was selected in my school to be a teacher representative for [deidentified schools inclusive leaders program], which is all about inclusivity in your school and how do we move that forward in our schools. When I first went into that project I had to tell them why I wanted to be a part of the project I said to them I'm here and I want to be part of this project because I truly and honestly believe with all of my heart that for these prep learners that I have, having a play based learning environment is the best way that I can promote inclusivity at my school. It's the best way that I can meet their emotional needs, it's the best way that I can meet their cultural needs, it's the best way that I can meet the academic needs, it's the best way that I can meet their behaviour needs. And I was firmly told at that first meeting for that project that 'oh yes um we can definitely see the benefits of play based learning but that's not the approach that this school will be taking.' ... Okay. [dejectedly]

What were you able to get out of that inclusive leaders thing? What could you do with that if you can't do what's at the basis of your practice?

Not very much.

So it's lip service?

Yes it's lip service, it's paying lip service and quite often that's what I find. There is a huge amount of fluff that can be sprouted at us about inclusivity and about meeting children's needs and about treating each child individually, but then when it comes to the crunch the important decisions are not being made, the important decisions about children's wellbeing are not being made which is really sad. It's saddening every

single day.

The other thing you said the other time we talked with the amount of assessment which means you really can't support to play based curriculum you would like to in your classroom and it's all about it that data and assessment you said what that results in some really challenging behaviour in children.

Exceptionally challenging behaviour, exceptionally challenging. Like the child who last week ran out into the classroom, grabbed a fist full of rocks and came back into my classroom started throwing them at me and other beautiful little children inside my classroom and then ran out and kicked table over, climbed up the highest tree and then was out of my classroom to the rest of the day and ended his day swinging from rafters and yelling obscenities at parents who were coming to collect the children.

So was he not able to be accommodated elsewhere?

No, he wasn't. He just spent his time running away from anyone who tried to calm him. And do you know what instigated that incident? Was that we had been playing inside my room and they were loving it so much and they were so engaged they were so, just, you know, gee you could see they were just lapping up what was going on and he was as well. He was completely and thoroughly engaged. And I had to ask them to pack away and I'd given him some time warning, and I'd given him the option of leaving what he'd been doing and he just didn't cope with that and so the consequences of that were rocks being hurled.

The challenging behaviour that you experience when they're seated at chairs being little students, does that make it hard when you've got an entire class to look after? You've been talking about cultural wellbeing in terms of the wellbeing overall in your classroom

Very difficult, very difficult. Difficult from a teaching perspective and almost heartbreaking to watch the other students in the room and how it affects them. It really detrimentally affects them. You can see the way children are reacting to situations like that where behaviour is taking over. Um they're five year old children who are trying to process that, and you know their anxiety comes out in lots and lots of different ways. So you have children who are not normally prone to being upset suddenly become upset. You have children saying I want to go home now which is terrible, a terrible thing to happen. And ultimately you have children who are then missing out on time they could have had with me as well because I am having to deal with that child as a direct result of behaviour. So I'm managing behaviour instead of being a teacher, instead of teaching.

And in some instances it's brought about because you need to be teaching in a particular way that's not the way you would teach, you would teach more play based and have those lovely moments that you were talking about that preceded having to pack away before the incident before that beautiful moment was gone.

It's gone. It's absolutely gone and it's tragic for somebody who has a strong belief, to feel that that's compromised is a real tragedy.

The other thing that struck me as tragic was that the other day you said you could quite easily walk away from teaching tomorrow. [Yeah]. Were you you joking?

No. No way. I absolutely wasn't joking and I'm very seriously still considering walking away from this career, for probably this reason.

This conflict that you face each day?

Yeah daily.

So it sounds to me as though this has happened to become more keen in you in these recent years as you've been weighing things like the decision to be devoting all this time in school where ultimately you're questioning your own capacity to make a difference and to teach in the way that you want to teach

Yes. That's the why I wanted to become a teacher. To make a difference in the lives of children because I love teaching children.

And if you don't feel like [pause] If you are [pause] It sounds dramatic to say if you are trapped in a situation, because I can leave the system and to find a venue that promotes play based learning, I could certainly do that but I guess part of me always remains hopeful that it will change and that the value of play is going to be seen. And I guess if you don't stay and champion the cause then who is there to do it?

So you do that that but it is done at quite high personal cost

Yeah definitely, definitely and I know lots and lots of early childhood teachers who feel exactly the same. Exactly the same. A little bit trapped in the system I think that I believe is getting it really wrong.

This is such reinforcement of the things that other teachers have been telling me too (yeah) and really I'm questioning at the end of these interviews that I've now had with many educators. The language in the education system is about 'improvement' (yeah, yes) and I guess what I've come to wonder about is whether the word improvement is actually cruel because it's endless... but I don't see that the improvement the system is looking for is necessarily the type of improvement that a society would hope for for its young people.

And that a society needs. These children need to be happy and nurtured and cared for in our education settings. In my school community it's quite a low socio economic area, these children are frequently coming from homes where there's discontent, homes where there's domestic violence. They're coming to school and need a place to be nurtured. And I don't believe that sitting five years olds down at a desk is the right way to go about nurturing children. I think it's the wrong way is what I think [very emotional voice]

So you're actually talking about basic human needs that are present in some students that are in your classroom. One of the Deputy Principals I spoke with said 'in our school', which is in a low socio economic area, she said 'Maslow has to come before Bloom. So hierarchy of needs comes before you can get to Bloom's taxonomy.

You know I sometimes worry that I've been teaching in this system that ultimately I personally believe is getting it wrong for so long that I've actually forgotten, I think I may have forgotten what truly play based learning looks like and feels like. I feel so detached from that and it's kind of eroded that passion I guess over time which is an awful feeling.

You sound quite emotional.

Yep. [emotional voice]

It can't be easy every day to set the alarm get up early and go in and know that you're flogging this, this... [breaks off, knowing Lauren is crying] I'm sorry I've made you sad.

Not at all.

Your heart is broken in this isn't it.

Yep.

And I'm calling you down a telephone line and can't even reach out to you to give you a hug.

It's all good.

Well it's not really. I think in the end when we think who is paying the price of this system, I think teachers are paying an enormous price.

I would agree with that. Teachers are, children most definitely are, and their families are as well. Definitely.

And for what?

Control.

But it seems to be a political imperative that's not in the interest of children's wellbeing nor teachers' wellbeing. I get a real sense that you're being squeezed to yield this data.

It's really terrible, but that's exactly what it's like. The students are little numbers in a system. I feel ultimately really sad about that.

And as you said, you're the data collector?

The assessor and the data collector.

Is that what you would have hoped for?

It's really not. It definitely is not. You know if someone had said to me when I was doing my degree, if someone had said to me prepare yourself for long days of asking children meaningless questions to get the best results on assessment, I would have walked away and gone 'well actually that's not what I want to do'. It's not what I signed up for. It's really not what I signed up for.

I've spent quite some time lately trying to think about what might go on in the mind of a teacher, from these interviews I've conducted. I think about what's in the front of the teacher's mind, and I feel that is to do with the room full of human beings in front of them in their classroom each day.

Delightful and wonderful little human beings they are too.

Then thinking about the back of a teacher's mind, I feel as though NAPLAN and assessment and curriculum is always looming there and that sort of sounds to me like the conflict that you were talking about.

Enormous conflict yeah on a daily basis. They talk about teacher accountability and that's all based on data. So we're always having to, you know we're called in for data conversations to explain why the data in my classroom is looking like this. And the end of year data. 'Why do you have children who have not moved off a level 0

reading text? Why do you have that number of children who do not have 40 sight words? Why is this?

But nobody ever asked me about how many children in my class love coming to school every day, or how many children in my class feel nurtured or you know how many children in my class are happy every day that they come to school and talk to me about what happens in their lives. Nobody ever asks me about that stuff ever. I've never ever had one conversation.

So it's all about the percentage not the person?
That's correct.

It reminds me of a saying I've heard that we measure the things that can be counted but sometimes the things that count can't be measured.

Perfect words. Just perfect words. That really sums it up in fact.

I think that your situation for me has been a really important one because it really hones in on what we are driving within the school system where data and assessment is so valued (It's the priority) is coming at the cost of children's wellbeing and teacher wellbeing.

It definitely is. Yep. It definitely is. If you set foot in my school you would see it etched on the faces of teachers. You would see drawn looking teachers who are not bubbling with enthusiasm. They are under the pump is what I would call it. And that doesn't lead to a happy thriving educational setting, I don't believe.

What does it lead to?

It leads to unhappy children. It leads to behaviour problems all throughout the school. It leads to teachers leaving professions. It is actually quite desperate I believe. It's quite desperate. And that may just be my experience because I've been at this school for a long time. I don't know what the experiences of other teachers in other schools are. I do know that I've had conversations and they're similar conversations with teachers from other schools. So I thank you for doing the research that you are doing because I think it's really important. It's really important. And I'm chuffed that you've allowed me to have my little say.

Well I thank you for sharing your story because I think it is important and I don't think enough attention is given to the price that we pay for the data we so desperately seek.

Transcript: Interview with Chelsea, Kindergarten teacher

Interview date: 27 Feb 2016

Could you please tell me about your classroom context where you teach.

Do you want the classroom context or my teaching context (*Hmm that's interesting*) because I spend a lot of time out of the classroom, so a lot of our cultural wellbeing happens outside of the classroom.

Please talk to me about that.

So the question was?

Tell me about your teaching context.

We are in [suburb name], at a suburban school, quite a well off community and we have a very supportive community and they understand that I do a lot of nature kindergarten, and they often have chosen to be in my class for that reason. And so we spend a lot of time outdoors in the vegetable garden, or in a place called [de-identified] Reserve which has really a high degree of naturalness, with many and varied natural elements.

What age are your students

Four and five, kindergarten. I'm a kindergarten teacher

So you say that you incorporate a lot of these natural elements in your teaching, what brought you to that?

Well I guess it all started reading Richard Louv's book 'Last Child in the Woods'. He made a lot of claims about the importance of outdoor play for children in natural places. And the negative consequences of having low contact with nature, and they were emotional, and physical and cognitive. I'm a bit of a sceptic, so I thought I'd better check this out. So that's what I did my project for my Master (of Education) on, so that led to me studying further and I did my project on the transformative nature of nature play.

So I'm interested that when I asked the first question about your classroom-teaching context, that you made the distinction do you want to hear about my classroom context or my teaching context, and I admit I thought wow nobody has asked me that before. But you have distinguished between the two and I wonder if you could tell me more about how you see your classroom context and your teaching context, the relation between.

Well the classroom is part of the teaching context, so yes I spend quite a bit of time in the classroom as well. But that's not all of it, and that's not where the most valuable learning happens either I don't think. A lot of what we learn outdoors translates back into the classroom, and some of what we learn in the classroom is carried to the outdoors as well, so there's a big overlap. But the really rich experiential learning happens in the great outdoors.

I'm interested in this idea of experiential learning, what do you see when you say this really rich experiential learning, what do you mean?

That's to do with when the children are engaged body and soul with what they're

doing. They are leading the learning, and they're following their interests and their curiosity. [Interruption for a few seconds]. So when they're learning experientially, it's not paper learning, it's not photocopied sheets, it's not hearing it second hand. They're setting the agenda, they're finding the resources, they're working out who they're going to play with and they're engaged – their bodies are there, their minds are there, and their emotions are there and you can see that there is a really deep investigation happening.

And I see a lot of children in traditional type of learning where they are sitting at desks, and they are all doing the same work, and it's not fitting to each child's experience or their developmental needs.

It sounds to me like you're guided by respect for children and their ways of exploring. Yes and I respect each child's individuality, so different children have different ways of learning and like Gardner's 8 intelligences. Traditional classroom learning caters for some of Gardner's intelligences, such as linguistic and mathematical. But the kinaesthetic learners are disadvantaged by largely sitting down indoors and the naturalistic learners are disadvantaged by four-walled, indoor sort of learning.

In some ways what you're doing goes a bit against the traditional model of teaching, well like in traditional classrooms when all students are working on the same work, whereas you are responding to the learners as people, and their individual ways of learning.

That's right but I do have intentionality around that and I will respond intentionally to whatever they're learning or whatever they're involved in and I will respond in terms of what might be another way of extending that. We will follow up investigations back at school.

So I mentioned I'm exploring this idea of cultural wellbeing. Can I ask what that expression might mean to you?

I haven't given it a lot of thought [there's no right or wrong here]

Well wellbeing, do you want me to talk about wellbeing? [Yes sure]

Wellbeing means healthy and balanced and contented and integrated and wellbeing, well I've taken it for granted. But cultural wellbeing is a bigger thing. It has to do with the people that you live with, and the places you live and connections that unite places and people, that's how I see it. And if you have really healthy connections you have cultural wellbeing. That's how I thought about it.

It fascinates me that in speaking with other educators from tertiary educators, to childcare educators to teachers in school, how familiar what you're saying in regard to that connection to people and places to communities has been. That idea has come through so often.

How do you see it, are you allowed to tell me what you think it is.

The thing is the approach I'm taking in this research is a grounded theory approach and the reason I chose to use this is because there's not a lot of literature about cultural wellbeing. I saw this idea cultural wellbeing mentioned in the AITSL principals' professional practices and I thought there's an interesting idea but what is it?

It is because you don't often connect cultural and wellbeing together and it's fascinating. I see why you would want to investigate that further.

So I wrote to the author of the AITSL report and she said it was in another AITSL document which I located, but really it just mentioned the term, there was no explanation of what is cultural wellbeing. Yet the principal's standards said principals create an ethos in which children's physical, social, emotional, cultural, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing is nurtured and I thought don't you think we need to know this.

So physical wellbeing, is a simple one, well relatively simple. *Keeping active.* But cultural wellbeing is a bit of an unusual combination.

Well I guess well we really need healthy, would it be like having a healthy culture? Healthy culture of support for each other and healthy culture of respect for diversity. It's having a culture that's not in conflict. Do you think that fits?

I agree. So this grounded theory approach means instead of me saying here's the literature that says this is what cultural wellbeing is, I'm seeing what teachers who work with children each day think to find out what does this expression mean for you and then, is it of any benefit to those in education to have this idea?

Well maybe if it was made more explicit it would be beneficial. But actually when I think about it, that is really one of the first things we work with when I have a new group of kindergarten children come into my class I try to have a culture of respect and a culture where everybody feels valued and equally heard. So I guess we're all doing it, but not really consciously. Not naming it up as cultural wellbeing. So trying to create a really cohesive group of families working with the kids in the class.

This is the thing, that is known to be good practice. Even the teacher professional standards indicate that teachers should know the students and their family background and value that. So many other teachers have talked about establishing the conditions in the classroom.

The very first thing is relationship, before you move into any other area with little kids when they come into the school, you've got to make them feel safe, valued, loved, stimulated, well. Challenging comes later. First nurturing. Welcome them with a warm welcome.

Why does the nurturing have to come before the challenging?

I think because it's the first experience of school, they've got to feel safe. They need to know who am I with and what do we do here, and it's got to be manageable, no challenges to scale early on. Little tiny steps so they think ooh I can succeed here and I fit here. Nothing that they can't manage.

So the cultural aspects, if I was trying to work out what are distinctively cultural aspects of wellbeing, like we touched before on physical wellbeing we hear about social wellbeing and emotional wellbeing. How could I think about what's distinctive about cultural wellbeing do you think?

I think a lot of that has to do with being aware of the bigger world than just your own so you're not just looking at your own narrow cultural experiences, but through education, through experiences, children need to come into contact with the wider world. So we do a lot of work with diversity, cultural diversity. We've got Harmony Day coming up but all through the year I stress that while we all share many similarities, everybody is also different and difference is valuable. At the end of the year for example we do a readathon and we raise money for children overseas. We go for a walk down in [de-identified suburb] and visit the cafés restaurants and

businesses owned by people from many different countries and they talk to the children about where all their cultural backgrounds are.

You take the children down into the cafes and?

So we write them a letter beforehand and say would like to visit your café or your establishment and is it okay if we come between this time and this time and can you just tell us where you're from and what your cultural background is. So this is just the broad cultural diversity idea. And we've had some great receptions, and they bring the children in.

[De-identified café] is really good, they bring us in and they give the children a mango lassie and they come and welcome us at the door in the costumes. It's beautiful. After our excursion, we look at the world map, and then we write them thank you letters and we look at the different languages. So that's the sort of broad cultural diversity and respect. But also that combines with what they experience in their own lives. We might have children in the class who bring different food, or we'll cook different food with family members.

So they are encountering the other.

And it's outside the four classroom walls. We're not only learning about it on paper or on videos although we do that too. But it's going out and connecting with the community.

I wanted to talk with you about that idea I hear you engage in the outdoors and in natural spaces, and I suppose we would like to see healthy biodiversity and I've been wondering about children in classrooms and whether cultural wellbeing is about healthy biodiversity.

Healthy environments definitely because that's part of our culture. We are where we are. And so is if this is our nearby nature we need to go up to [de-identified reserve] and we have to see what sort of creatures are up there, and we have to see where the water comes from and where it goes to, and we look out across the ocean and we recognise cycles and connection and interconnectedness. So sustainability is a really important part of cultural wellbeing too because it's our future and our children's future. It would be irresponsible of us to not have an ethos and a practice of sustainability.

It sounds like this resonates strongly with your own personal values.

You always do teach with your own values. You can't easily step out of your values.

Maybe cultural wellbeing is an idea of helping us to understand how our values inform the culture and climate of the classroom.

And it's very important to make sure that families know what sort of values are informing the program I'm offering. Fortunately because of the type of area I teach in, there is really great support from the families because that's what they want for their children. I'm not sure how it would go in disadvantaged areas.

That's an interesting thought isn't it, like with sustainability sometimes it's talked about as being a middle class concept, does cultural wellbeing sort of fall into that same space. That's all well and good if you're getting breakfast lunch and dinner...

If you haven't got food, a home or your physical wellbeing isn't good...

I would wonder though, could cultural wellbeing maybe help to create conditions where general wellbeing can be enhanced?

I think it can. I think that they are probably inseparable aren't they. But I think if you're starving, what's the Maslow's hierarchy of needs?

That brings it into sharp relief doesn't it? Well I think we need to wrap up now, I know you need to go and check on your colleague.

Did we get through everything?

A lot of the questions were more general, so for example one question I have asked hypothetically if I came and did an observation in your classroom what would be happening? What should I be looking for if I wanted to see cultural wellbeing happening as you see it?

Children would be collaborating with each other and they would be supporting each other and communicating well. Outdoors you would see a lot more crossover of social groups, you'd see a great deal of intermingling between the children. And they be working together, they'd be carrying big logs up the hill together, making beautiful aesthetic sorts of things together in the bush.

It sounds like they have quite a lot of ability to shape their own learning area.

More so outdoors because indoors it's little bit more structured and they're working within the constraints of what I put out for them you know. It is more constrained.

Outdoors I guess nature provides many of the structures

And much of the learning. Nature is the third teacher isn't it?

How does that translate? What does that look like?

Well just the experience of it, so if they're in the veggie patch and they're wanting to plant some seeds, they've got some big seeds here, they've got some big broad beans and they've got some little peas. So we talk about that's a big seed so that needs a deeper hole than that seed. And if you plant that seed too deep what's going to happen? It won't be able to push its way up and if you plant that one too shallow, what's going to happen? It'll dry out. So let's measure how deep you're going to plant that. Gardening has important mathematical applications. And how many hand spans apart, will it have to be two hand spans, and that's this big. So the requirements of nature will tell the kids what to do. And if they don't do it that way they'll learn that their plants won't grow.

So that is authentic learning in the sense that they experience the consequences of their successes or the decisions they make better. What you said got me thinking as well just that natural connection to the curriculum instead of we're going to sit here and [measure how long this piece of paper is with blocks] or we're going to draw a bean and measure it, why not go out and really engage with a bean?

And then there's the sensory engagement too, they're getting the sounds of the outdoors and the smell of the earth, the more the senses are engaged the more the synapses are synapsing. That's not a word. *It's a good word I like that.*

But also there is this shared project that they're working around and that's providing structure for engagement.

And there is a lot more sharing once you build up that culture in your classroom

And that sharing is the sort of thing you're talking about when you are explaining what you would see in your classroom if you were observing cultural wellbeing and you said collaboration.

Well that's a part of sharing. You see a lot of collaboration outside of the playground. The playground at the school, there's conflict there because children are limited in their play because they haven't got many leaves, haven't got much bark, has to be 'safe' so there are no stones, so what do they do? They race around, they fall over, they get in trouble with each other. It's not such a strong culture in a 'soft-fall' environment with limited loose parts play.

So some enrichment of that environment with the natural resources; the leaves, the bark, the stones that we take away to keep kids safe.

Well we're not keeping kids safe are we, that doesn't keep them safe.

What does it do instead?

It puts them at risk because if they haven't got something to engage their imagination they start pushing each other over, they run like crazy, they fall on the ground and skin their knees etc.

And I have to ask this question it seems that you are in a state school and it seems not everybody teaches like you. Why aren't more teachers teaching like you?

I think some people are unsure of the outdoors; some think it's too risky. Many teachers themselves experienced a childhood diminished in nature play and need support and training in seeing all the opportunities to address all the learning domains in the outdoors. And it's the psychological hurdle. And also (the indoor classroom) is all set up, familiar and it's a traditional sort of process that these teachers have been in for many many decades, that's hard to change, but outdoor play and Education for Sustainability is becoming more widespread as a result of the increase of research into its value to children's emotional, social, physical and cognitive development. And the influence of the Forest Kindergarten movement has been quite strong.

We seem to be bent on in some ways making it hard for teachers, with all the assessment, and other the other hand making it very easy with things like an iPad for every student. We don't even have one iPad, but we have the great outdoors.

I'm not against technology, I love it. But I don't like seeing children mindlessly sitting in front of screens because they don't learn so well. They need to see a human face, they need human interaction and interaction with the natural world.

Appendix E

Constructivist grounded theory Coding Sample

Research question 1: What are educators' perceptions of cultural wellbeing?

Open coding

<i>Open code</i>	<i>Properties</i>	<i>Examples of participants' words</i>
Caring for students holistically.	Aware of basic human needs. Discerning where needs are not being met. Advocating for students' access to material basics. Knowing students learn when they feel safe.	"They [students] are coming to school and need a place to be nurtured." "for students to feel safe to share their learning in the classroom there has to be an ethos of respect which works both ways."
Connection with self, community, place and cultures.	Connecting with who I am as a person. Connecting with the wider world. Connecting with your background culture. Connecting with other cultures.	"a large focus of what we do actually looks at that process which gets kids thinking about who am I as a person? What values do I want to start to think about if I'm going to be the best person I'm going to be" "connectedness to me but also a connectedness to other people, and other possibilities" "through education, through experiences, children need to come into contact with the wider world, outside the four classroom walls" "Feeling proud of what you are and what background you have, and not feeling kind of ashamed." "We are a global world... surrounded by other cultures and being different. We should make it an advantage and not an issue anymore, being different and diverse."
Connecting with own values and experiences.	Relating cultural wellbeing with own experiences.	"To be seeing cultures not as an impact but as an enrichment... I had the experience when I was young. I didn't like it that I had this strange last name... I tried to deny my roots."

Research question 2: How do educators support cultural wellbeing in classroom communities?

Open coding

<i>Open code</i>	<i>Properties</i>	<i>Examples of participants' words</i>
Establishing enabling conditions for cultural wellbeing.	Knowing students. Discerning when needs are not being met. Responding to students' needs. Accessing material basics for students. Establishing trusting relationships. Respecting students and expecting respect	"Are they getting enough food? Enough water? Enough sleep? That's where I would start." "For some children we'd feed them, let them have a sleep and then we'd teach them if we could teach them."
Connecting students with enriching experiences and powerful learning.	Designing experiences for connecting. Developing structures to foster students' active participation in learning. Seeking a "healthy balance" between feeling safe (comfortable), and the discomfort required for learning.	"We spend a lot of time outdoors in the vegetable garden, or in the [adjacent] nature reserve." "We go for a walk down in [suburb name] and visit the cafés restaurants and businesses owned by people from many different countries"
Activating cultural capital and social capital for students	Accessing resources. Linking students to capital.	"what I'm interested in is connecting the learning, having the learning at the centre of the student and the real world, and I guess literature and the texts that we study. And for me that involves cost" ("here's \$7000 for a full 300 copies of this hard-to-get text... And some of the things we do with having speakers come in; we can take [students] to the theatre, and we do.")
Valuing students' cultural backgrounds and interests in the classroom community.	Enabling students to lead the learning.	"We did an event [in the classroom] – a compilation of all the things we [the students] could bring – Portugal, Serbia, Kosovo, Italy. I thought it would be a great enrichment." "The really rich experiential learning... when the children are engaged body and soul with what they're doing. They are leading the learning, and they're following their interests."

<p>Navigating contemporary conditions of schooling</p>	<p>Critiquing contemporary conditions in society. Critiquing systemic barriers. Empathising with the contemporary conditions students are dealing with. Finding they can't effect the changes they know are needed for students' wellbeing</p>	<p>"One of the things about learning now is it's mainly focused on the inside, it's not out in the big world... students become very alienated from the natural world." (negative evidence)</p> <p>"Look I know that it's a problem, but I'm not the sort of person that demands, and I will just work around it. I just want to make sure that my students aren't disadvantaged through it." (negative evidence)</p> <p>"the curriculum sits up over your head like a heavy weight. And I see the stress that it's causing in this school because teachers are being told that they must come up to a particular level" (in their NAPLAN scores) (negative evidence)</p> <p>"I have had very passionate heated, [um] open and honest conversations with administration, about why I believe play-based learning should be the way that we are going for children. And they nod their heads, and then say 'yes but that's not our agenda here'." (negative evidence)</p> <p>"you can't wrap them up in cotton wool and pretend it's all smooth sailing"</p>
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Axial codes and selective codes based on the open codes

<i>Open codes</i>	<i>Axial codes</i>	<i>Selective codes</i>
Establishing enabling conditions	Knowing students learn when they feel safe.	Wanting to support cultural wellbeing.
	Seeking a balance between students feeling safe (comfortable), and the discomfort (cognitive dissonance) required for learning.	Wanting to support cultural wellbeing.
Responding to students' needs.	Knowing and acting on the ways we should support students' learning and wellbeing	Being unable to legitimate practices of supporting cultural wellbeing.
Enabling connection with self, community, place and cultures.	Connection with self, community, place and cultures.	Connecting students with enriching experiences and powerful learning.
Navigating contemporary conditions of schooling	Educators unable to effect the changes they know are needed for students' wellbeing	Being unable to legitimate practices of supporting cultural wellbeing.

Appendix F

F.1 A typology of culture – literature connections

There were three notable ways that educators referred to culture:

- Culture as the ways of life around here;
- Culture as how we recognise and identify as humans; and
- Culture as cultural production and expression.

To briefly summarise, the first usage, culture as connected with school culture encompasses the ways of life within the school and classroom communities.

Secondly, culture as recognition and our ways of identifying as humans includes social and cultural processes which are central to the ongoing project of identity formation. The third way of referring to culture as cultural productions and expression incorporates participation in human processes of communication and representing of ideas.

I produced a typology of culture during the data analysis stage to support the presentation of findings. The analysis revealed that educators perceived three key interpretations of cultural wellbeing, based on meanings of culture which related to: school culture; recognition and identity formation; and cultural production and participation in the life of the classroom community. Table F-1 records the presence in educators' interview data of these strong categories which emerged from the analysis illustrating the emphasis that educators placed on different interpretations of

cultural wellbeing. I include the preliminary typology of culture here to show the theoretical connections that were made post-analysis.

Table F-1 - Concepts of culture

Educators	Related to the school culture	Recognition and identity formation	Cultural participation & production
Jacky	✓		
Valerie		✓	
Kathryn		✓	
Mary	✓	✓	
Belinda	✓	✓	✓
Kirsty	✓	✓	✓
Dan	✓		
Ryan		✓	
Beth		✓	
Chelsea	✓		
Natalie		✓	✓
Stella	✓	✓	✓
Charles	✓		✓
Lauren		✓	

Within this typology these three articulations of culture are presented separately, however they are conceived of as connected and overlapping as depicted in Figure F-1, and thus are viewed as mutually reinforcing and contributing to each other.

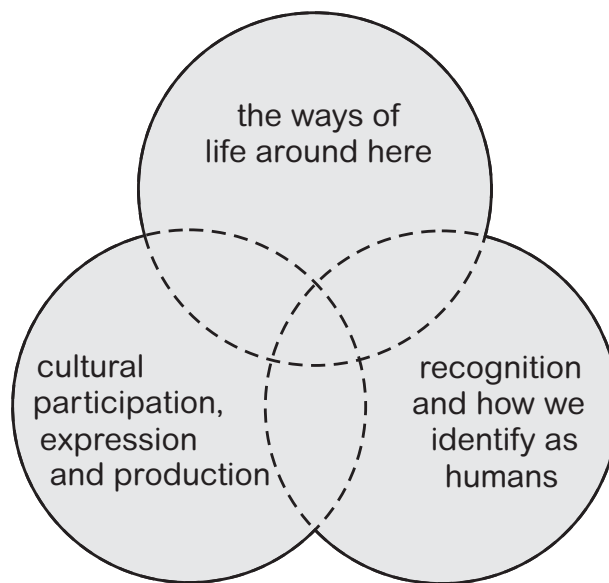


Figure F-1 - A visual representation of the typology of culture

F.2 Type 1: Culture as the ways of life around here

The idea of culture as the ways of life in a particular place resonates with Williams' (1985b) anthropological usage of culture as the way of life of a group of people - in this case, students, educators, school administrators and other participants in the classroom community. This usage of culture encompasses the concept of school culture which is explained in some detail here since it was evident within the data. The term "school culture" is often employed interchangeably with "school climate" (Van Houtte, 2005; Van Houtte & Van Maele, 2011) and both have been found to have connections with students' wellbeing. School culture is described as "a fairly stable set of taken-for-granted assumptions, shared beliefs, meanings, and values that form a kind of backdrop for action" (Smircich, 1985, p. 58). In this way school culture can be difficult to discern due to its tacit dimensions (Deal & Peterson, 2010; Orchard, 2002). School climate is generally interpreted more broadly as associated

with the environmental quality of the school encompassing its infrastructure, social composition and cohesion (Deal & Peterson, 2010).

A healthy or positive school culture enhances student wellbeing and academic engagement. Research conducted for the New Zealand Education Review Office (n.d.) found that developing a positive school culture that explicitly supports students' wellbeing is a first step towards improving wellbeing in schools. Public Health England encourages whole-school approaches to promoting health and wellbeing and evidence compiled for Public Health England (Brooks, 2014) indicates “the culture, ethos and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and their readiness to learn” (p. 4).

School culture and school climate is implicated within the “learning ecosystem” view of schooling advanced by Hannon (2011). In this view, Berkowitz Moore, Aster and Benbenishty (2017) describe schools as being “embedded in multiple social contexts that interact with surrounding social, cultural, and physical environments” (2017, p. 457), all of which impact upon school climate and school culture. In an Australian study of wellbeing, Graham, Powell and Truscott (2016) found that this wider milieu of schooling has consequences for students' wellbeing and drew attention to the prevailing performative logic of education as influencing school culture, academic engagement and students' wellbeing. Moss (2014) considers school culture in terms of interconnectedness arguing for education that fosters connections and “remains conscious of the damage caused by ‘education and culture which prefer to separate [rather] than to work on connections’” (Vecchi, 2010, p. 27, cited in Moss, 2014, p. 98).

School culture shapes and provides meaning and purpose in students' interactions, activities and work (Deal & Peterson, 2016), which are also connected with student wellbeing (Mayr & Ulich, 1999). This reinforces the important connection between school culture and student wellbeing.

F.3 Type 2: Culture as recognition and how we identify as humans

The concepts of recognition and identity formation offer a view of culture which depicts humans as both individuals and part of the larger collective of humanity at the same time. Recognition theory proposes that reciprocal recognition in interpersonal relationships involves love, respect and esteem (Honneth, 1996). Adapting Honneth's theory for wellbeing research in school contexts, Graham, Powell and Truscott (2016) reconceptualised the three modes of intersubjective recognition as involving students being *cared for*, *respected* and *valued*, which they found were the basis for relationships that support students' wellbeing. Further extending Honneth's work, Ikäheimo (2017) describes horizontal and vertical dimensions of recognition. The horizontal dimension describes interpersonal recognition between people (for example, students in a classroom community), and the vertical dimension reflects the recognition between social institutions (such as schools) and individuals or groups of people (such as a classroom community of students). Ikäheimo identifies the "embeddedness of recognition in structures of social power" (2017, p. 578), by which individuals or groups receive recognition according to a mechanism of evaluation. The emergence of new perspectives linking recognition to wellbeing (Graham, Powell & Truscott, (2016) suggests the contemporary relevance of the concept of recognition, which is further signalled by Kukutai and Walter's call for "expanding the recognition

space” (2015, p. 325) through recognition of Indigenous geographic and cultural diversity.

Recognition is part of the complex process of identity formation which according to Honneth (2004) occurs “through stages of internalisation of socially standardised recognition reactions” through which people gain awareness of themselves as “both *a full* and *a particular* member of the social community” (2004, p. 354 emphasis added). The dual nature of recognition that Honneth outlines signals the uniqueness and the universality of human identity. Sawicki (1988, p. 184) conceives of identity as “constituted by myriad social relationships and practices in which the individual is engaged” rather than a “fixed and unified entity” (1988, p. 183). Identity formation is viewed as a relational learning process that is lived, negotiated, social, and a nexus of multiple memberships in a local-global interplay (Wenger, 1998) reinforcing Sawicki’s suggestion of identity as a negotiated and situated phenomenon.

Classroom communities are cultural and social spaces of recognition and negotiation of identities, and the complex networks of relationships constituted within schools and classrooms can be productive for mutual recognition which is important for wellbeing (Honneth, 2004). Accordingly, classroom communities provide a “rich and complex set of relations of practice” (Wenger, 1998, p. 162) for identity formation. At the same time that students negotiate lessons and school work in classroom communities each day, they are also engaged in the ongoing process of identity work. The interpretation of culture as the ways we recognise and identify as a human brings attention to classroom communities as spaces embedded in structures of social power (Ikäheimo, 2017), in which students engage in ongoing processes of identity work as they participate in the practices of schooling.

Theories of recognition and expression are important cultural aspects of classroom life that bring attention to which (and whose) identity claims are recognised and respected in classroom communities. These perspectives draw attention to the ways in which students and educators are mutually recognised as human beings with rights and how they are supported in their identity formation in classroom communities. The idea of students as cultural contributors is pursued in the next section which focuses on cultural participation, expression and production.

F.4 Type 3: Culture as cultural participation, expression and production

This aspect of culture includes cultural production and expression, involving processes of symbolic exchange and meaning-making. Hall (1997b) describes making and communicating meaning as symbolic practices of exchange which are processes through which people can come to appreciate themselves and others, and through which (relating back to Type 2 in this typology) identity claims can be made. This reveals the inter-relatedness of the interpretations of culture in the typology.

Cultural production is conceptualised by Gaztambide-Fernández and Arráiz Matute (2015) as “any form of creative and symbolic exchange that arranges and/or rearranges available materials through cultural practices in order to express, create, and recreate ideas, feelings, and various aspects of cultural life” (p. 3). The emphasis here on “available materials” draws attention to “the material and symbolic relations that shape people’s lives” (p. 3). Therefore, as with the first and second Types of culture, this third Type, culture as cultural participation, expression and production is influenced by social locations.

I argue that the amalgam of cultural participation, expression and production can be conceived of as human learning. Here I seek to discern between “culture as learning” in a positivist paradigm (which Moss also terms “a paradigm of regulatory modernity” (2014, p. 95)) in contrast to an emergent paradigm (or “post-foundational paradigm” (2014, p. 95)). An emergentist epistemology accepts learning as emerging in the relationships between learners and matter (Moss, 2014), a view that accords with Biesta and Osberg’s (2007) claim that knowledge is “*not* a reflection of a static world but emerges from our engagement with the world” (p. 28, emphasis in original). In conceiving of culture as cultural production and expression in this typology, I acknowledge both received learning of established bodies of knowledge (as in the positivist tradition critiqued by Moss (2014)), and emergent learning and cultural production. De Ruyter and Spiecker (2008) encourage participatory approaches to developing cultural awareness and competence amongst students and prioritise early immersion in a “genre rich environment”. Describing a genre rich environment as having diverse cultural influences, resources and practices which embrace many forms of cultural production, the authors advocate student participation in the cultural life of society for developing knowledge about cultural artefacts and practices including arts, academic, scientific and technological genres as well as understandings of diverse social backgrounds (De Ruyter & Spiecker, 2008, p. 355).

The three different ways that educators drew upon culture in making meaning of cultural wellbeing have aspects that are discernible and available for empirical observation to greater or lesser degrees. Observable aspects of the second and third usages in the typology (Type 2: how we recognise and identify as humans, and Type 3: cultural production and expression) include experiences, performances, shared activities, objects and images (Holden, 2006, 2009), and mass media, language and

the arts (Kuttner, 2015). The first usage of culture (Type 1: the school culture) can be more difficult to discern, since it is often more intangible (Deal & Peterson, 2016).

There are also aspects of culture which are neither articulated, nor objectively observable, but include sensed, felt, remembered, embodied and deeply held parts of human experiences as suggested by Maxine Greene (1995).

Appendix G

Practices and pedagogies employed by educators to support cultural wellbeing.

<i>Summary of the practice or pedagogy</i>		<i>Pedagogical approach</i>
<i>Ethic of caring</i>		
Lauren Natalie	Getting to know students' families and learn about their backgrounds to help understand how best to support each child.	Valuing diversity
Kathryn Rick	<p>Attending to students' human needs (i.e. safety, food, shelter) to ensure students are ready for learning.</p> <p>For example, Rick begins each school day by "checking-in" with students as a whole class, to share what is happening in their lives outside of school.</p>	Personalising learning
<i>Experiential pedagogies</i>		
Belinda Chelsea Dan	Engaging students in school vegetable gardens where growing and preparing food combines with curriculum learning (i.e. sustainability, maths, science education).	Outdoor education
Dan Kathryn Valerie Chelsea	Involving students in outdoor education experiences where students learn through the action-consequence environment of the outdoors.	Outdoor education
Charles Stella Kirsty Kathryn Valerie	School-community arts partnerships where school students interact and work with family and community members on art projects to build a sense of belonging while also developing students' arts skills.	Arts projects
Mary Kathryn Valerie Belinda	Exhibiting students' art works to broader school and outside community (i.e. Sharing childhood memories exhibition of posters in library; cultural arts program exhibitions of work in Admin building and in local community centre; arranging exhibition of students' art work in high profile venue)	Arts projects

<i>Summary of the practice or pedagogy</i>		<i>Pedagogical approach</i>
Kathryn Valerie	Kathryn and Valerie engage students in a weekly cultural arts class, working in a learning circle on collective and individual art works involving contemporary and traditional Aboriginal arts practices.	Arts projects
<i>Critical thinking and inquiry</i>		
Mary Beth Ryan Jacky Kirsty	Conducting classroom inquiries into generative topics and big ideas which students explore, research and investigate both individually and through group processes.	Collaborative inquiry; philosophical discussion; Arts as collaborative inquiry
Mary	Students inquired into childhood memories during a unit of work, finding out similarities, differences and common experiences of their childhood development, and learning about associated principles of psychology and sociology.	Collaborative inquiry
Beth	Inviting authors and poets into the classroom to share their experiences and insights into engaging with literature and develop students' authoring skills.	Mastery learning
Ryan	Investigating and discussing the rise and fall of historical civilisations to consider how contemporary civilisation might manage to sustain.	Philosophical discussions
Jacky	Fostering curiosity and capacity for inquiring into why scientific phenomena occur, through manipulating materials to create effects	Experimentation
<i>Community participation</i>		
Dan	Participation in a project rehabilitating degraded farm land in a partnership involving a farming family, the school, NRM (Year 8 students).	Outdoor education
Natalie	Students planned an international food celebration day where families brought a dish from their own cultural background for sharing with the other families in the class.	Family involvement in schooling; valuing diversity
Rick	Arranging for students to attend to the finals of the local basketball competition to see his team play.	Connecting with community events

<i>Summary of the practice or pedagogy</i>		<i>Pedagogical approach</i>
Kathryn Valerie	Engaging students in a weekly cultural arts class, working in a learning circle with members of the community to create collective art works involving contemporary and traditional Aboriginal arts practices	Arts projects